

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

THE PUBLISHERS desire to convey to Prof. Radhakrishnan their grateful thanks for allowing them to bring under one cover his very thoughtful and inspiring discourses on 'The Heart of Hinduism', 'The Hindu Dharma,' 'Islam and Indian Thought,' 'Hindu Thought and Christian Doctrine,' 'Buddhism' and 'Indian Philosophy.'

In the words of Principal Jacks, Prof. Radhakrishnan is not only a great living master of Eastern thought but of the Western as well. "The Heart of Hindusthan" containing his principal discourses 'vital, valuable and illuminating' reveals the Eastern mind to the Western. Since the days of Swami Vivekananda no Indian has done such signal service to his mother land as Prof. Radhakrishnan in presenting in his own inimitable language to the Western world all that is truest, noblest and best in Hindu religion and thought.

The Publishers desire to convey their warmest thanks to the Editors and Publishers of the various periodicals from which some of the papers have been reprinted and to Messrs. George Allen & Unwin for permission to include in this collection the chapter on "Indian Philosophy."

The Publishers also desire to express their indebtedness to Dr. J. K. Majumdar, M.A., for contributing to this volume, a clear account of "The Life and Works of Prof. Radhakrishnan."

It is hoped that this volume will be welcomed not only in India but in the West as well where Prof. Radhakrishnan has numerous friends and admirers.

12th. Feb. '31.

G. A. NATESAN & Co.

CONTENTS.

THE LIFE & WORKS OF PROF S. RADHAKRISHNAN

By Dr. J. K. Majumdar, M.A., (*Oxon.*)

THE HEART OF HINDUISM	...	1
THE HINDU DHARMA	...	28
ISLAM AND INDIAN THOUGHT	...	58
HINDU THOUGHT & CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE	...	82
BUDDHISM	...	116
INDIAN PHILOSOPHY	...	124

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

THE HEART OF HINDUISM.

(The Hibbert Journal.)

THE HINDU DHARMA.

(The International Journal of Ethics.)

ISLAM AND INDIAN THOUGHT.

(The Indian Review.)

HINDU THOUGHT AND CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

(The Madras Christian College Magazine.)

BUDDHISM.

(The Prabuddha Bharata.)

INDIAN PHILOSOPHY.

(Reprint from Allen & Unwin's Book "Indian Philosophy" 2 Vols)

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF PROF. S. RADHAKRISHNAN

I

PROFESSOR Radhakrishnan was born on the 5th September, 1888, at Tirutani, a place of pilgrimage in South India, forty miles to the west of Madras. Nothing much is known of his parents excepting that they belonged to a middle-class Brahmin family of the orthodox type, the father holding the post of a Tahsildar in the employ of a Zemindar. The father is now dead but the mother is still living. Though born in an orthodox Hindu home, Radhakrishnan's early boyhood and the best part of adolescence were spent in Christian missionary institutions under Christian influence. To what extent he imbibed the Christian spirit or to what extent the Christian influence worked in the moulding of the man, is more than we can say, but if it has left any influence at all this has gone a long way to make him a truer Hindu, and who at that time knew that its product would in future enchant and enthral the minds of the very countrymen of those who at one time claimed to teach him the rudiments of knowledge? The debt of gratitude to Christian teachers from the West in his early life he doubly repaid by teaching them and their countrymen in his later life and giving more food for thinking in such a critical juncture of world affairs.

Prof. Radhakrishnan passed the entrance and F. A. examinations of the University of Madras from the American Mission College at Vellore in 1903 and 1905 respectively and was placed in the First Division. He then joined the Madras Christian College at Madras and was

successful in passing the B. A. and M. A. examinations of the same University in 1907 and 1909 respectively, securing the first place in both the cases. The year in which he passed the M. A. must have been a very stiff one for the examinees in Philosophy, for he was the only candidate to succeed. The above record amply testifies to his high merit as a student, and there can be no doubt that he must have been considered a very brilliant and highly promising student by his teachers both at school and college, which has now been fully corroborated by the wonderful success he has achieved as scholar.

The year in which he passed the M. A. augured well for him. The same year he was appointed an Assistant Professor of Philosophy in the Madras Presidency College in the Sub-ordinate educational service under the Government of Madras. In 1910 he went for training for the L.T., and after a short absence came back and joined his former post in 1911 permanently. In 1916 he was promoted to the Provincial grade and made a Professor there. While acting as a Professor in the Presidency College, Madras, the authorities of the University of Mysore conceived the idea of appointing him to the post of the University Professor of Philosophy. They approached the Government of Madras to lend Radhakrishnan's services for the purpose, for a period of five years from 1918-23. The rapid promotion from the subordinate to the provincial grade together with the offer of the University Professorship at Mysore show beyond all doubt that as a teacher he must have been successful from the very beginning of his career, and as years rolled by his name and fame began to spread so widely that it crossed the boundaries of his own province and reached far-off places. We hear of Prof. Radhakrishnan's success as a teacher even at a place like the Oxford University, where he occupied a temporary position on the teaching staff recently, in a report that he marvellously kept up his audience for the three terms that he stopped there. The Government of Madras having acquiesced in the request of the authorities of the Mysore University Prof. Radhakrishnan joined the Mysore University in

1918. In 1920 the Government of Madras again promoted him to the Imperial grade (I.E.S.), the highest grade in the educational service under the Government. This further shows how even the Government did not lag behind in appreciating his merit and amply rewarding him for that.

Higher honours were awaiting him. As Indians would say, he was born under a very lucky star and was destined to be great. And those believing in fate or *adrishta* would be amazed to find how the mysterious and unseen power taking him in her kind hand was leading him on and on. Radhakrishnan may attribute his success to luck. In 1920 the King George V Chair in Philosophy in the Calcutta University fell vacant, as Sir Brajendranath Seal was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mysore. And Sir Ashutosh Mukerjee, the then Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, was on the look out for a competent man to fill up the vacancy. Prof. Radhakrishnan since his early career had been a writer and during the years he was acting as a Professor in the Presidency College, Madras, he published two books, one a primer of Psychology and another on "The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore". Both of these books were published in England. The book on Tagore was received very well indeed, and brought him forth as a writer of great ability and penetration. These were followed by another and a larger volume on "The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy" in 1920 when he was acting as Professor at Mysore, and like the other two, this was also published in England. This volume not only brought him name and fame but led to his recognition as an authority on the subject and a first-rate thinker in Europe and America. These things did not escape the notice of the great Sir Ashutosh, and his keen intellect enabled him to pick up at once this great scholar as the most competent man for the post. Those having a personal knowledge of Sir Ashutosh know well his genius for the discovery of merit and ambition for getting the famous scholars to his University. So he went so far as to request Prof. Radhakrishnan through a common friend to apply for it on an assurance that he would be selected. And that

his selection was absolutely right is amply justified by the brilliant achievements of this great scholar which have once for all silenced the critics of Sir Ashutosh who felt aggrieved at his choice. Radhakrishnan joined the new post in March, 1921. So long as Sir Ashutosh lived he never failed to give him encouragement and provide all facilities for higher work in the Post-Graduate department of the Calcutta University. We find Prof. Radhakrishnan acknowledging in the preface of his book "Indian Philosophy" his deep obligation to Sir Ashutosh Mukerjee.

In June, 1926, the Empire Universities' Congress was to be held in Cambridge and the authorities of the Calcutta University were asked to send delegates for the purpose. The University selected Professor Radhakrishnan among others. Of course, this was not the first opportunity Radhakrishnan had of proceeding to Europe. He was invited twice or thrice before but for various reasons best known to himself he declined these invitations. And even in 1926, he was not inclined to go but thanks to the persuasion of the then Vice-Chancellor, Sir Ewart Graves, he consented most unwillingly. As soon as it was known that Radhakrishnan was leaving for England, invitations from the leading Universities, learned societies, etc., to lecture there during his stay were received in large numbers including one from the Upton Trust. Thus, while out there he must have had a very busy time, and it is quite natural that on account of the shortness of his stay there, his retiring disposition did not accept all. But wherever he went his lectures were a tremendous success. *The Social Reformer* for July 3, 1926, had the following on "Radhakrishnan in England" from a correspondent there :

To-day the Calcutta University has really honoured itself in picking up a genius like Prof. Radhakrishnan who has been sent as a delegate to the Congress of the Universities of British Empire—When he came here in that capacity, Oxford, the oldest and the best of the Universities, has availed itself of the opportunity in choosing Prof. Radhakrishnan and broke a tradition by calling an Indian for the first time to deliver the Upton Lectures at Manchester College. Mr. Jacks, the Principal of that college and the editor of the famous philosophical journal, *Hibbert Journal*, said : 'You have honoured us by delivering your first lectures outside

India in our University'—The other day Cambridge gave a reception to him. All the philosophers, logicians and metaphysicians of that famous University attended. He spoke at the Moral Sciences' Club on Bradley and Sankara. Those who listened to him were surprised at the excellent way in which he tackled the subject and especially the admirable exposition of the difficult problem of 'maya,' and the leading Professor burst out saying that no Englishman or Indian had so clearly spoken on Hindu Philosophy within the walls of Cambridge in a manner which appealed to a Western audience.

Special mention should be made in this connexion about the lectures Prof. Radhakrishnan delivered under the Upton Trust on account of their high importance. In former years such eminent persons, among others, as Miss Evelyn Underhill, Dean Inge of St. Paul's and Dr. L. P. Jacks of Manchester College, had the honour of being asked to do so, and the learned Professor was the first Indian to be selected for it. And he more than justified his selection in this, if not in anything else, that his lectures held their own against the "Eights." Those acquainted with Oxford know well that the Eights Week is the most exciting time at Oxford when both the professor and the student, the lecturer and the pupil, the Dons and the graduates get wholly absorbed in the inter-collegiate boat races. At the close of the course of lectures Principal Jacks paid a high tribute by remarking :

A course of lectures which has held its own against "Eights" is a rare phenomenon in this University ; it may be claimed that this course has established a record in this respect. Without meaning any disrespect for "Eights" I may say that those, who like myself, have deliberately chosen to attend this course rather than to go to the river, have made a wise choice. In asking you to offer an expression of gratitude to Prof. Radhakrishnan for that which he has given us, I am only asking you to do what you yourselves are eager to do. He has brought before us a wonderful picture of the vast hospitality of the Hindu mind. Hospitality is the word which came to my mind a number of times as I listened to his talks ; catholicity I would have called it, but hospitality, to my mind, means all that catholicity means and a good deal more. It means depth of feeling and breadth of outlook, characteristics of Hinduism as he has presented it to us. Not mere hospitality—that which offers a bare bed and a casual ward for every religious tramp ; the hospitality of the Hindu mind is that which educates and enlightens the mind which accepts the Hindu faith without forcing anything on it, if it be unwilling. You will agree with me

that this hospitality characterises Hinduism. As I have heard him, the words that came to my mind are those of the New Testament, 'In my father's house are many mansions'. A new meaning of spiritual charity dawned on my mind, there were moments when I was tempted very much to say almost 'thou persuadest me to become a Hindu'. But I felt that the very points that tempted me to turn Hindu were also the very points that I hope will some day make me bold enough to say that I am a Christian. In the few remarks I made when introducing Prof. Radhakrishnan I ventured to say that the Indian mind has contributed much in the past and still has vast contributions to make. The Professor's lectures have borne out the truth of my remarks. The West has already learnt much from the East and still has much to learn, even as it has much to teach.

The Annual Report of the Manchester College, Oxford, for the year 1926 had the following paragraph :

Prof. Radhakrishnan's lectures, given under the Upton Trust, have constituted a notable event. The matter of the lectures, on the philosophy of Hinduism was profoundly important and interesting and they were delivered with a command of the subject-matter and a power of exposition which greatly impressed all who heard them. Hinduism, as expounded by Prof. Radhakrishnan, may be said to have illustrated the principles of Manchester College on a scale of which those acquainted only with Western religion have no knowledge. The lectures were as eloquent as they were profound. The audience was large, varied and attentive and it is noteworthy that they increased almost to the point of inconvenience in spite of the fact that they were held during Eights Week, when even the best lectures in Oxford have difficulty in gathering an audience.

Writing in the *National Christian Council Review* Dr. McNicol regards the Upton Lectures as "A really important work" and "represents the beginning of a movement within Hinduism which may have important developments." Again, Dr. Sydney Cave writing in the *Congregational Quarterly* observes : "A man of wide culture, familiar with the philosophies of the West as of the East, and writing with enviable lucidity and charm, no one is better equipped than Prof. Radhakrishnan to interpret to the West that new and purified Hinduism of which he is probably the most distinguished representative. This brilliant manifesto of modern Hinduism deserves the most careful study from all Christian thinkers". The *Expository Times* commented : "His faith is fortunate in its champion—a man alert,

thoughtful, fair-minded, armed cap-a-pie in the matter of knowledge, and the master of a trenchant style full of the stab of arresting sentences". The *Guardian* called it "epoch-making". The *Daily News* had the following note under the caption "A Great Scholar": "The leading philosopher of India Prof. Radhakrishnan is in London. He has engagements to fulfil at Oxford, at the Institute of Philosophical Studies, London, at the Ethical Church, and at the Moral Sciences Club, Cambridge. Afterwards he is visiting the American Universities. One of the remarkable things about this Indian scholar is his command of the subtleties of the English language. He will discourse in English for over an hour on some profound metaphysical subject without consulting a single note". Sir John Woodroffe, who attended the lectures, wrote in the *Modern Review* (Calcutta) for September, 1926, an illuminating note, and we can well quote portions of it here. Sir John observes:

Prof. Radhakrishnan of the Calcutta University has recently been doing good work by his lectures given in the West on Indian Philosophy. He came to Oxford after having addressed audiences both at Cambridge and London University. I was privileged to hear him at Oxford where he delivered four lectures in Manchester College under the presidency of its Principal Prof. Jacks, the well-known editor of the *Hibbert Journal*. The lectures were given under the Upton Foundation by the Professor who was the first Indian to lecture under that Trust. Although it was "Eight Week" with all its attractions the lecture room was yet filled to overflowing on each occasion and the Professor was answering queries in his room until late in the evening. To most if not all of these inquirers, the Indian philosophic case was probably being given for the first time.——They dealt with some of the important philosophic concepts of Hinduism and with the attitude of the latter towards other religions. The lectures were very fluently delivered and were admirably clear.——Others also have done good service in explaining Hindu religion and philosophy.——But taking together his books and his extended tour of lectures the statement of Dr. Jacks that no one had done more than the Professor in stating the Hindu case seems at the present day justified——to the great Believers and Sadhakas the first rank is accorded, but there is room and a great present demand for those who like Prof. Radhakrishnan can speak as philosophers to those Europeans who are themselves philosophers or for whom philosophy has an interest. For such the Professor has the advantage of possessing an Indian *Sanghata* which enables him to understand a knowledge of both Sanskrit and Indian Philosophy on the

one hand and European Philosophy on the other presented in good clear English speech. This combination of knowledge and talent has awakened an attention which will be of benefit to those who it is hoped will follow him.

Prof. Radhakrishnan's Upton Lectures have since then been published in England in book-form under the title of "The Hindu View of Life", about the subject-matter of which we shall have occasion to say something later on, but the unstinted praise these evoked, which we have noted above, go to show beyond all doubt that he more than justified his selection to the high honour in all respects.

The same year the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy was held at the Harvard University in America in September, and Prof. Radhakrishnan was deputed by the University of Calcutta to represent it there. So he left the shores of England in July with all the good wishes of his friends and admirers there. As soon as it was known in America that Prof. Radhakrishnan was coming, invitations to lecture before the leading Universities, etc., began to pour. And perhaps the offer of the University of Chicago to him to deliver lectures under the Haskell Trust was most noteworthy. These lectures were previously delivered by eminent men like J. H. Barrows, Cuthbert Hall, A. W. Jackson and Kenneth Saunders, not to mention others. In America also Prof. Radhakrishnan's lectures were a tremendous success as in England and evoked equally unstinted praise. In the absence of reports of all these lectures, we would better quote here the one at hand about his address in the Philosophical Congress. The *Boston Globe* of America for September 16, 1926, had the following comment:

No sooner had the prolonged applause of the audience (for Prof. Dewey) died down than a Hindu philosopher, Prof. Radhakrishnan, of the University of Calcutta, tall, dark-skinned and slender, with Oriental tunic and turban, continued in even more vigorous terms the criticism of a "fact-ridden" world. Speaking perfect English, without manuscript, Prof. Radhakrishnan went through all the institutions of modern man, from the family to international relations, and scathingly denounced them for their dependence on science without reflexion. Now making

the great audience rear with laughter at a witty reference to the instability of marriage in the Western world; and then holding it so silently attentive that the creaking of a chair sounded large, Prof. Radhakrishnan called upon peoples everywhere to develop the capacity to draw aside from the whirl of events, periodically, and discover what they mean. Expressing pleasure at having heard Prof. Dewey, who, he said, looms in the Orient, as an important philosopher, and confessing his surprise that he could agree with what Prof. Dewey said, the Hindu declared that "scientific invasion is universal". He said that it has penetrated India and upsetting traditions and standards without having formulated any others to take their place. Making the audience chuckle at his sarcastic reference to "philosophy as a discussion of essences and senses" and as "the doctrine of subsistence and essences in current logic and epistemology," thereby paraphrasing or repeating the very titles listed in the programme for discussion by various divisions of the Congress, Prof. Radhakrishnan stated with emphasis that it is not that kind of philosophy the world needs. Some in the audience were plainly dumbfounded at this casting of satirical darts at the nomenclature and classification used by Western philosophers. Prof. Radhakrishnan seemed to delight in it. Obviously extemporizing as he went along but with a quick and profound facility that brought expressions of amazement from members of the audience, he reacted instantly to the mood of the audience and with his hands stuck under his tunic across his stomach, he leaned toward the upturned faces and gave them one flashing criticism after another. With intense fervour in his strong voice, he insisted that what the world needs is a philosophy that will embrace "a whole spiritual outlook" for all peoples of the world. "The attitude of 'my religion is right, not yours; my race is greatest, not yours, my nation is the greatest, not yours,' must be relinquished," he declared. With the utmost simplicity, he described the Hindu principle of the oneness and wholeness of this universe, and the Hindu practice of periodic retirement from the seething world—"not literally in body"—so that the mind can reflect upon life, looking it from the outside, and can establish a personal spiritual poise and strength. Urging the Hindu philosophy as a solution for the pressing problems of to-day, he concluded that the fulfilment of that philosophy requires "great discipline and self-sacrifice." Even greater applause than followed Prof. Dewey's address greeted Prof. Radhakrishnan. He half rose from his chair two or three times to acknowledge it. After the meeting there was a buzz of admiring comment about him.

Thus, with all the laurels of victory over him Prof. Radhakrishnan returned to India in the following December. And in this connexion the name of the illustrious Swami Vivekananda stands forth before us with all its glory. Those having no knowledge about the great

Swami know with what a startling effect he addressed the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. Though there is no doubt that the address of the Swami on the above and other occasions, together with the writings of Sister Nivedita, his disciple and convert, produced a deep and lasting effect on the Western mind, yet, as Mr. Tuckwell says in an article on "Indian Philosophy" contributed to the *Hibbert Journal* (October, 1930), "something further, something rather different, is needed now. What we are asking of India at the present time is, not so much the missionary to convert, as the teacher to instruct us." And Prof. Radhakrishnan is perhaps the most brilliant and competent of these teachers that the new India has produced. After his return to this country it fell to the lot of the newly established Andhra University to honour him first with the title of D. Litt., at its second convocation held in November 1928, with the Governor of Madras, its Chancellor. Prof. Radhakrishnan belongs to the Andhradesha, so the University of his native place has done well to show this unique honour to one of the most distinguished sons of the soil.

The tremendous impression that Prof. Radhakrishnan produced in England, which was perhaps strengthened by the publication of the two large volumes of his "Indian Philosophy", did not all go in vain. A short time after his return to India, the Chair of Comparative Religions fell vacant at Manchester College, Oxford, owing to the retirement of Principal Estlin Carpenter, and this was offered to the learned Doctor. The late Lord Haldane was the chief man to take the initiative, though it was not known to anybody here, until Dr. Drummond, who came to India a couple of years back, in the course of his lectures at the Calcutta University declared that the last thing which Lord Haldane did before he died was to propose the name of Prof. Radhakrishnan for the above post. Lord Haldane's was a great name in politics but he was also a philosopher of note, and he had a profound regard for what is best in Indian thought. In an article contributed to the pages of the *New Era* for October 1928, he remarks "The spirit in the East is different from that of the West but the task is

to discover whether there is not a fundamental basis in common to the spirit in both cases". And he believed that such a basis exists. "However East and West have come to diverge over details, the essences of their final doctrines are not divergent. If this be so, it opens up a new avenue for hope in the quest after final truth". And for this he thought what was most called for at the present time was an increased amount of reciprocal interpretation. But this, we must say, was not a mere idea that he cherished in his mind but it was seeking for expression in action. And to give a practical shape to the desire, which must have been burning in his great mind, and which he thought would go a long way to the realisation of the desired end, he availed himself of the first opportunity that came his way of suggesting an Indian for the Manchester College post. Nothing could be better than giving a chance to an accomplished Indian scholar to interpret the fundamentals of Indian thought to the West, for, he says, "if we come by study to the highest quality in Indian thought, this must, when found, be given the first place, inasmuch as it is found to have influenced profoundly everything important that has come afterwards". (*Ibid*). And he thinks that though Indian reflexion in its various aspects has been studied in the West, yet the way in which accomplished Indian thinkers have mastered the idealism of the West thoroughly, is found wanting on the part of thinkers of the West to master equally thoroughly the idealism of the East. After Western scholars had done their best the need still remained that India should speak for herself. And that the choice to such a responsible post fell on Dr. Radhakrishnan shows in what a high esteem he was held by the greatest men in England. Though the post was offered permanently he could only accept it temporarily on account of his previous commitments in India. In this connexion Dr. Radhakrishnan was to have left for England in 1928, but pressure of work here prevented his going till the next year, and the authorities at Oxford were good enough to accommodate him. So he left for England in September 1929, to join the post in the following October. This time also the news of his

coming to England was known there long before he left India, and there was no dearth of invitations to lecture in various institutions. The most notable of these was the invitation of the Hibbert Trust. The Hibbert Trustees availed themselves of the opportunity of so distinguished a scholar's visit to England and invited him to give the world-famous Hibbert Lectures. He was the first Indian to deliver these lectures.

The editors of the new edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica were obliged to give a place for an article on Indian Philosophy in the latest edition, thanks to the work of scholars like Radhakrishnan, and requested him to contribute it.

Radhakrishnan's second visit to England met with perhaps greater success than the first. The enthusiasm and admiration of the people there for this great teacher in no way abated by the running of time. The way in which his Hibbert Lectures were received bears ample testimony to this. The honour shown to an Easterner was perhaps unique and unprecedented. Perhaps never before him was any lecturer so successful and able to stir the soul of a conservative people like the British, and this with the ancient message of the East. We hear that when he delivered the course of his Hibbert Lectures in the spacious hall of the University College, London, the hall used to be full to the overflowing on each occasion and when Radhakrishnan used to enter the place the whole audience would stand up to show their reverence and listen with all attention to his wonderful lectures. This he must have enjoyed tremendously as any other human being would. To show how wonderfully his Hibbert Lectures both at Manchester and London were received we can do no better than quote here some of the remarks that were made by distinguished men at the conclusion and comments on these that appeared in the press. At the conclusion of his lectures at the Manchester University Prof. F. E. Weiss, ex-Vice-Chancellor, in proposing the vote of thanks remarked :

It gives me great pleasure as senior member of the Senate to express on my own behalf and on behalf of this large audience our warm thanks to Prof. Radhakrishnan for the wonderful series of lectures which he has just concluded.——It is true as you said in your first lecture that we are assailed by religious and philosophic doubt, but you Prof Radhakrishnan have shown how this can be overcome, and you have given us courage and hope for the future. I am glad to see that so many of our students have taken the opportunity of attending these Lectures. Their presence takes my mind back to the time forty years ago when as a science student at University College, I was privileged to hear Dr. Martineau, Prof Estlin Carpenter and Mr Wickstead lecture on topics similar to those you have been dealing with. I am deeply grateful to the Hibbert Trustees that they have enabled us and our students to hear your inspiring lectures. I am sure like myself all members of the audience will have marvelled not only at the skill and eloquence with which you have developed and presented a difficult subject, but also at the wonderful mastery you have shown of a language not your native tongue. We have looked in the past to the East for culture, for philosophy and religion, to Greece, to Palestine and to India, to-day we have sat again at the feet of a great Indian teacher, and we shall leave this lecture-room encouraged and strengthened by the words you have spoken and the views you have put before us. I have the greatest pleasure in proposing our warm thanks to Prof Radhakrishnan for his inspiring and helpful lectures.

Dr. H. McLachlan, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, in seconding the vote of thanks said

As a former Hibbert student it is perhaps appropriate that I should second the vote of thanks. In doing so I should like to express my thanks to the Hibbert Trustees for allowing Manchester to have the benefit of listening to the admirable course of lectures which Prof. Radhakrishnan has just concluded. We have had the privilege in the past of hearing something about Indian thought and religion from two former Professors of the University, Prof. Rhys Davids and Prof. Farquhar, to-day we have heard India herself speaking, through one of her most distinguished sons. It seems very appropriate to me that these Hibbert Lectures should be delivered in the Manchester University which possesses the only undenominational Faculty of Theology, and seeing the great interest they have evoked, I hope these splendid lectures will be the inauguration of many others which the Hibbert Trust may arrange for. I have great pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks.

In a report of the University of Manchester appearing in the *Manchester Guardian* for December 21, 1929, at the end of the Winter Term we have the following paragraph :

One of the most interesting things of the present term was the course of four public lectures on 'An Idealist View of Life' by Prof. Radhakrishnan, who occupies the Chair of Mental and Moral Science in the University of Calcutta—Not only were the lectures brilliant and deeply interesting in themselves, but it was gratifying to the University authorities to find that there was so large an audience interested in lectures of a high quality which dealt with philosophical and religious ideas.

A course of four other lectures under the same Trust was also delivered by Dr. Radhakrishnan at the University College, London. Mr. C. E. M. Joad writing in the *Spectator* (February 15, 1930) about these says

Prof. Radhakrishnan might have been specially cast for the role of interpreting the religious thought of the East to Western audiences, and the four lectures which he has delivered at University College, Gower Street, on "An Idealist View of life" have attracted the largest gathering which has been seen at any public lectures on a philosophical subject since the War. For the size of the audience the personality of the lecturer is in part responsible. Prof. Radhakrishnan is a past master of the technique of lecturing. He is extremely fluent, and his lectures, delivered entirely without notes, flow in a stream of perfectly turned sentences, which would put most English speakers to shame. His style is vivid and arresting, made picturesque with apt illustration and metaphor, and crystallising into epigrammatic phrase which result not from a forced collocation of ideas, but from the drive of his thought seeking logical expression. "It takes centuries of history to make a little tradition" (I am quoting from memory), "it takes centuries of tradition to make a little thought", is a good example of his manner, and there was an excellent definition of the millennium at a time when "all the heads will be hard and all the pillows soft". The most noticeable fact about the audience, apart from the number of Indian students, was the large proportion of young people that it contained. The lectures formed no part of a recognised University course and attendance was entirely optional. Nevertheless young men and women, many of whom, to my knowledge, had been earning their living since half-past nine in the morning, while others had, I suppose, already attended a couple of lectures on the same day, were there in hundreds, listening to a profoundly religious man expounding to a generation which has largely lost its religion a profoundly religious view of life.

At the conclusion of his lectures the ex-Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, Sir William Collins, who was simply fascinated and was in raptures, burst out saying that he found no adequate words to express his deep sense of gratitude to, and feeling for the learned Doctor.

"We always look to the East for our wise men," said Sir William, "and to-day we have had the privilege of sitting at the feet of a great Eastern teacher. I congratulate the Calcutta University on its Professor of Mental and Moral Science." Then, turning to the lecturer, he added "I wish I had had a professor like you, Sir, when forty years ago I studied mental and moral science in the University College, London."

In conclusion, the Chairman said that he had the privilege ten years ago, as Vice Chancellor of the University, of presiding over the Hibbert Lectures delivered by M. Bergson, and his privilege and pleasure were no less on the present occasion in listening to a philosopher whose profundity of thought, brilliancy of exposition, and richness of language were at once their envy, their admiration and their despair (Loud Cheers).

Dr. Radhakrishnan was also privileged to deliver another lecture carrying high honour, *viz.*, the Jowett Lecture for 1930. The Jowett Lectureship was founded over thirty years ago in the Mary Ward Settlement and has a very distinguished committee. To quote the words of the original syllabus—"the primary object of the Lectures shall be to promote the study of the Bible and the history of Religion in the light of the available results of criticism and research." Many extremely interesting courses of lectures or single lecture were delivered since then, by such eminent men as Prof. Sir George Adam Smith, Dr. Percy Gardner, Dr. P. H. Wicksteed, Dr. C. G. Montefiore, Prof. F. G. Burkitt, Prof. Paul Sabatier, Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, the Dean of St. Paul's, and Dr. J. Bethune-Baker. The subject of Prof. Radhakrishnan's lecture was "The East and the West in Religion."

Again, to show the high value and persuasive character of Prof. Radhakrishnan's lectures we cannot but here mention an incident which took place at the close of a lecture of his at Cambridge. The *Inquirer* for March 8, 1930, reports: "An elderly lady brought up in the bosom of orthodox Christianity of the 'Imperialistic' type, was expressing her appreciation of the lecture, and remarked: 'It has made me ashamed to think of many of the mis-

sionaries we have sent out to India'. The Unitarian to whom she spoke, replied: 'I have long been opposed to missionary enterprise for the propaganda of Christianity. True missionary work is getting a man like Radhakrishnan to come here to promote understanding and mutual respect, and for us to do likewise'. The old lady said: 'That is just what I now feel.'

Prof. Radhakrishnan's short term of office at the Manchester College, Oxford, met with equal success. A report says: "At the end of the last lecture on the 5th, Thursday, to an audience which kept up marvellously for the three terms Principal Jacks expressed deep thanks of the authorities of the college and the members of the audience for the 'vital, valuable and illuminating discourses' which helped to reveal the Eastern mind to the Western. He said:

Not only is Prof. Radhakrishnan a great living master of Eastern thought, but as you must have discovered a great living master of Western thought. His presence in the college has been of immense benefit to those who came into contact with him and he is a true representative of the coming vital synthesis of East and West. His charm of manners and his humanity have endeared him to us all. I venture to express the hope that these will not be the last occasion when he will be heard. In wishing him a safe and prosperous voyage to his native land may I request him to convey to his people our message of good-will and respect for the country which he has so considerably enhanced by his presence and discourses on this land.

Perhaps nothing could be a better certificate than this as to both his quality as a lecturer and man.

Thus Prof. Radhakrishnan reached the shores of India once again early in July, 1930, in all glory. And only the other day in recognition of his great and unique achievements as a scholar and services abroad the authorities of the University of Calcutta on the eve of the expiry of his quinquennial term of office at the said University confirmed him for life, a fact which is unprecedented in its history. Great tributes were paid to him on that occasion.

In giving an account of his life we have so far described Radhakrishnan the scholar, but a few words about

Radhakrishnan the man may not be inappropriate. Even in this respect also he is great. To speak of Radhakrishnan as a man we think it would be proper if we describe him as a 'gentleman', a truly cultured man with all that it implies. Matthew Arnold spoke of sweetness and light as the marks of culture, and we find these fully illustrated in this great scholar. In speaking of light perhaps the first and foremost thing that characterises it is humility. In the Hindu Shastras it has been said that knowledge or light produces humility, and this is eminently true of Prof. Radhakrishnan. We may say he is all humility. The high honour and position that he has gained would easily have turned the head of many another, which is especially true of our unfortunate land, but with him its effect has been the other way, instead of making him puffed up it has resulted in an engaging self-effacement. If people go to him and speak of his achievements he would feel shy and turn the conversation to other topics. This is really most characteristic of him. The way in which he mixes with people without making any distinction of rank or prestige perhaps best illustrates this quality in a practical way. He would never let anybody feel, whoever he may be, that he is in the company of a great man; none feels awkward in his presence, instead it often happens that one who does not know him at first but comes to discover who he is afterwards would rather be surprised at the humility of the man. His doors are wide open for anybody and everybody, and whoever goes to see him is never disappointed without a visit. Then, again, his utter simplicity in the mode of living, informal ways in mixing with people, devotion to friends and causes—are but other signs of true culture. He leads the life of a philosopher. The old motto: "Plain living and high thinking," finds a true illustration in him. He mixes with people as one of them. Friends find in him warm devotion and readiness to help in necessity. Right causes find in him a true and ready sponsor and spokesman. Radhakrishnan has got both the sweetness of the head and the heart. The sweetness of the heart expresses itself in what we call sympathy. Sympa-

thy with people does not lie in mere lip-deep words but in action. Mere lip-deep sympathy repels people, but sympathy in action attracts them. Perhaps this is the secret which draws so many people to his door. People in various walks of life flock to his doors for different kinds of help, for he is said to be so influential. And nobody is disappointed; even if he cannot help anybody materially he has at least this consolation that he found a response of the heart, which counts greatly. The sweetness of the heart also may be said to express itself in forgiveness. Friends he has many, and if anybody would ever do any wrong to him he pities him and is ever ready to forgive him. He would perhaps never have even an unkind word for him. What we call temper is perhaps conspicuous in him by its absence. One hears of it even from a menial at his place. The sweetness of both head and heart has perhaps found its best illustration in his family affairs. Even to an outsider the whole family seems to be happy and joyous, which is a sure indication of peace reigning there born of sweetness. The children must have found in him a sweet and dutiful father, the wife a sweet and dutiful husband and the guest a sweet host.

II

We now propose to give an account of Radhakrishnan's works. We have already hinted that Prof. Radhakrishnan has been a writer since his early career, he has not only been contributing articles to journals but has also been able to publish books on philosophy. His first book to appear was "The Essentials of Psychology," published in England by the Oxford University Press in 1911. This was a small book mainly intended for students, and was based on his lecture notes. Nothing of importance is heard of this primer, but the undertaking of its publication by a firm like the Oxford University Press proves beyond doubt that it was ably written, and must have marked him as a writer of note which he so well proved later on.

The next book to appear was "The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore" in 1918. This was published by Macmillan & Co., in England, and was the first book of its

kind in English. For its charming and lucid style, and also for deep penetration, it drew unstinted praise even from Tagore himself* not to speak of others. And it was also well received by the reading public, as we find the first edition was exhausted within such a short period as six months and a second edition was called for.

This was followed by a bigger volume on "The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy", published by Macmillan & Co. in England in 1920. This was hailed in the West not only as a scholarly piece of writing but also as authoritative on the subject, and it drew him to the front rank of speculative thinkers.† Mr. Tuckwell writing in the *Hibbert Journal* (October, 1930) on "Indian Philosophy" says that the attention of West was first drawn to the Professor's book "because it so confirmed our own more limited knowledge and experience of Western thought and religion". In this book Radhakrishnan tries to show how the deviations from what has been called the 'high priori road' of absolutism to the 'by-bath meadow' of pluralism, pragmatism and theism have been all due to 'the reign of religion in philosophy'. In the view of the

* In a letter dated Shantiniketan, Dec. 28, 1918, Tagore writes: "Though my criticism of a book that concerns me may not be seriously accepted I can say that it has surpassed my expectation. The earnestness of your endeavour and your penetration have amazed me in this book and I am thankful to you for the literary grace of its language which is so beautifully free from all technical jargons and a mere display of scholarship."

† In a review of the book in the *Philosophical Review* (November, 1920) Prof. Hinman observes: "The present volume is, I think, one of the most notable that have been contributed in recent years to the debate between absolute idealism and its opponents. The author is a thoroughly trained and competent exponent of the idealistic tradition—Indeed I do not know of another work which, between the covers of a single volume, deals so effectively with the issues raised in recent discussion as this book—The book is exceptionally well written. The style is clear, vigorous, and of absorbing interest. Practically every sentence counts. The author thoroughly understands himself and his opponents, and his criticism, while usually fair, is pungent and incisive. Certainly the reader of idealistic tendencies will feel that here at last is a champion of notable power, and that his analysis of opposing views constitutes what Horace Greely used to denominate "mighty good reading."

author "systems which play the game of philosophy squarely and fairly, with freedom from presuppositions and religious neutrality, naturally end in absolute idealism". This absolute idealism, according to the author, is the most reasonable theory that affords full moral as well as intellectual satisfaction to the spiritual being of man. The task which the author undertook was really most difficult and at the same time bold in the face of the formed judgment of the West on its merits. The grand and classical idealistic systems of Kant and Hegel found few disciples in the West and failed to become popular, so in their place various other systems arose breathing much less of the high metaphysical air, thus more easily gaining the heart and applause of the people. In the article mentioned above Mr. Tuckwell says that in ascribing the cause of such deviations from the 'high priori road' of absolutism to the mere reign of religion Prof. Radhakrishnan has rather paid an indirect and undeserved compliment to the West. He would rather hold that these deviations may be thought, sometimes at all events, to be due more to the native philosophical incapacity of the Western mind than to the direct influence of religion. The mind of the West is rather defective in introspective genius as compared with that of the East. We cannot discuss this point here, but would only confine our attention to the main thesis of Radhakrishnan that the influence of popular, organised religion on contemporary philosophy has been malign. In this treatise Radhakrishnan has dealt at length with the systems of the chief contemporary representatives of pluralisms and theisms in the West and developed with great skill and penetrative insight the charge that they have all been illogical in order to accommodate thought prescribed by religious necessities. These religious necessities, of course, are not the true needs of religion, which are most genuinely and adequately met by absolute idealism, but they are rather necessities imposed by popular religion, and especially by the somewhat dualistic form of Christian theism usually formulated for the popular and unphilosophical mind. In criticising what is called theism Radhakrishnan's aim has been to show the superior

cultural and religious value of what is called pantheism. This pantheism in his mind is that of the Vedanta, which may also be called absolute idealism. In his view modern idealism logically developed terminates in pantheism, and in this he finds a great argument for the profound truth of Vedantism. But this pantheism, which Prof. Radhakrishnan accepts, may be said not to be *simon* pure, *i.e.*, it is not of the orthodox type generally ascribed to Sankara or Ramanuja but one which seems to combine the merits of both. A few quotations from his treatise would make the author's position clear. "The Vedanta system," the author remarks, "cannot be considered pantheistic if by pantheism we mean an identification of the world with God. According to the Vedanta, nature or the world is only an expression of God. God is more than the world. The finite reveals the infinite, but is not the whole infinite" (Pp 445-46). The following remark is perhaps a more clear indication of his mind which he had in attacking a certain aspect of Bergsonism: "This way of getting over the pressing problems of philosophy is strongly reminiscent of the Monistic school of Indian Vedanta in which all the puzzling problems of the relation of the Absolute to Maya are traced to a confusion between the metaphysical or noumenal, and the empirical or phenomenal conceptions of reality. But the phenomenal and the noumenal cannot be held apart. The metaphysical has to be related to the historical. The absolutists who are mostly 'identity' philosophers reduce difference and diversity to an appearance, illusion, non-being and irrationality. (P. 162) Again, "False absolutism has come down, while the true is considerably strengthened. Abstract monism, which destroys personal values and reduces individuality to illusion — is a defective attitude of life". (P. 410). In fact, what Prof. Radhakrishnan is advocating may be called concrete idealism. In the face of the opprobrium attaching to the term "pantheism" in the Western mind it would perhaps be better if we call the Vedantism, which Radhakrishnan represents, as pantheism, by which name also the Hegelian absolutism, especially as represented by

Hegel's right wing followers has been called. Anyhow, Prof. Radhakrishnan's position is clear, he is a strong representative of the pantheistic wing of idealism, which found its first expression in the Upanishads in India. The Upanishads represent the earliest form of speculative idealism, and if it had not directly influenced the later development of idealism, all that is good and great in it seems to be an unconscious commentary on the Upanishadic ideal and fully anticipated in them. The last chapter of the treatise has been devoted to a consideration of the Upanishadic idealism bringing together the indications of such an idealism scattered in the course of the book which arose by way of criticism of the systems of Western thought indicated above. The treatise of Prof. Radhakrishnan has been considered so important that it has been recommended as a text-book for advanced students in metaphysics in Universities like Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard, etc.

The next work of Prof. Radhakrishnan was "The Indian Philosophy" in two large volumes, covering nearly 1,500 pages of close matter. This was published by Messrs. Allen and Unwin in England in their famous *Library of Philosophy* series, the first volume in 1923 and the second in 1927. The second edition of the first volume was called for in 1929. All the chief systems of Hindu philosophy have been dealt with in its pages, and though there are many books of the kind existing, in lucidity of style, clarity of thought and masterly dealing of its subject-matter it has easily surpassed all and found its recognition everywhere. The book has been a great success and in it Radhakrishnan's rare gifts perhaps find their best illustration. It would perhaps go down to posterity as a monumental work of its kind.

The book is really a history of Indian thought, though the author prefers to call it simply Indian Philosophy. And the reason is not far to seek: the uncertainty of the chronological sequences of the different systems of Hindu thought has perhaps been the chief determinant of such a nomenclature. In this short essay it would not be possible to give an account of the different systems of thought dealt

with in the treatise, but we should note only a few points which would give an idea to the reader of its general nature. At the very beginning the author says that to the modern Western mind in general Indian philosophy has meant some fantastic ideas. He, on the other hand, observes that to the intelligent student of philosophy it would rather be found to contain such a wealth of detail and variety of material that has hardly any equal in the world. There is hardly any system of thought in the world that has not been anticipated in it. The author's aim in this treatise has been not so much to narrate Indian views as to explain them in order to bring them within the focus of Western traditions of thought.

Now, one of the most important characteristics of Hindu thought, is the unbroken continuity of its evolution. Hegel's grand conception of the Idea gradually revealing itself in the course of human thought until it finds its culmination, has been well illustrated in the history of Hindu thought. Starting from the crude philosophical speculation of the Vedas the idea found its culmination in the articulated idealism of the Upanishads, which is the highest idealism in the world and which is the fountain head of India's speculative thought for all time.

Another important characteristic that strikes one is the essential spirituality of Indian or Hindu thought. India has had to pass through many a catastrophe, which might well have crushed any other civilisation in the world, but the most peculiar thing is that India has always been able to tide over them and hold its head high. This indicates the existence of a power of unusual strength in it, which can safely be traced to this spirituality. The height of spirituality it had attained has not been equalled in any other part of the world as yet. The spiritual motive has dominated Indian life. Philosophy in India has not been confined to the forest retreat of the Rishi, but it has dominated the minds of the masses. "The hard task of interesting the multitude in metaphysics is achieved in India." In all its reformations the Brahmins have been the guides and leaders. It was the Brahmins who were

the conservators of spiritual knowledge. Plato's idea that philosophers should be the rulers and directors of society was really practised in the soil of India. Though problems of religion stimulated the philosophic spirit, religion has never hampered philosophic discussions. Religion in India has never been dogmatic. It has been "a rational synthesis which goes on gathering into itself new conceptions as philosophy progresses." Philosophy has been a handmaid of religion, it has rationalised the religious experience. Philosophy has been a way of life, an approach to spiritual realisation. "Every doctrine is turned into a passionate conviction, stirring the heart of man and quickening his breath." Reason has been allowed to freely question and criticise the creeds in which men were born. That is why we find the heretic, the sceptic, the unbelievers, the rationalist and the free-thinker, the materialist and the hedonist, all flourishing in India's soil. All this bears a clear testimony to the strong intellectuality of the Indian mind. Intellectuality has not been confined to mere philosophy and theology, but it extended to all the spheres of human activity.

Now, philosophy, which has been the guide of life, to determine the nature of reality may start either with the thinking self or with the objects of thought. In India philosophy has started with the thinking self of man; "Know thyself" has been the motto of all philosophy in India. Philosophy has been evidently psychological at its start, *i.e.*, psychology has been the basis of philosophy. "Indian psychology realised the value of concentration and looked upon it as the means for the perception of the truth. It believed that there were no ranges of life or mind which could not be reached by a methodical training of will and knowledge." Now the human mind has three aspects—the sub-conscious, the conscious and the super-conscious. What has been called the abnormal psychic phenomena are but the workings of the super-conscious mind. This forms the special subject-matter of the Yoga system of philosophy and the other systems refer to it and utilise it for their own purposes. To know truth philosophy must take these three states of consciousness into account.

Though the subjective interest has been dominant in the Indian mind, the objective did not lose its attraction. In objective sciences also the Indian mind contributed substantially and laid foundations for many. "We cannot reasonably say that the Indian people revelled in poetry and mythology, and spurned science and philosophy, though it is true that they were more intent on seeking the unity of things than emphasising their sharpness and separation". The synthetic vision of the Indian mind has made philosophy to comprehend the different sciences in a unity. The subjective interest of the Indian mind, together with its tendency to arrive at a synthetic vision of the universe has made monistic idealism the truth of things. It is the highest truth revealed to the Indian mind, and however much other systems of thought may seem to differ from it, it has held the central position and has been the basis of all systems of thought. "If we can abstract," observes Prof. Radhakrishnan, "from the variety of opinion and observe the general spirit of Indian thought, we shall find that it has a disposition to interpret life and nature in the way of monistic idealism, though this tendency is so plastic, living and manifold that it takes many forms and expresses itself in even mutually hostile teachings." This monistic idealism, the author indicates, has assumed four different forms in the history of Indian speculative thought viz., (1) Non-dualism or Advaitism, (2) Pure monism, (3) Modified monism, and (4) Implicit monism.

The spiritual experience, which, as we have seen above, forms the basis of the whole Indian thought and culture, is what may be called mysticism. Here the term "mysticism" should not be taken in its narrow, restricted sense as involving the exercise of any mysterious power, "but only as insisting on a discipline of human nature, leading to a realisation of the spiritual." Thought, the chief instrument of the philosophical endeavour, is not sufficient by itself to reach reality; it cannot grasp the full content of reality—it must culminate in intuition. Simply because intuition transcends thought, it should not be thought that intuition ceases to be rational. All that may be said is that intuition is the crown of thought

or reason born of a thorough and intense discipline of the mind. Thus, Indian philosophy has been regarded by many as one system of continuous revelation, the final being in the Advaita Vedanta where the scattered lights have been brought to a single focus.

The section on the Upanishads in the first volume and that on the Vedanta in the second volume of the "Indian Philosophy" were published as separate treatises in 1924 and 1928 respectively under the respective titles of "The Philosophy of the Upanishads" and "Vedanta according to Sankara and Ramanuja". The first has a Foreword and an Introduction written to it by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Mr. Edmond Holmes respectively, which are of a quite appreciative nature. The idea of reprinting the two parts as separate volumes and of fixing a moderate price was perhaps to meet the convenience of the interested readers who cannot afford to devote so much time as is required for a serious study of the whole book. The justification of printing these two parts only was, again, that they stand perhaps as the most important of all the systems of Hindu thought, and are perhaps most widely read. Of these two the Upanishads occupy the first and foremost place. Mr. Edmond Holmes writes in the introduction: "For what is quintessential in Indian philosophy is its spiritual idealism; and the quintessence of its spiritual idealism is in the Upanishads." The Upanishads have been taken to be the fountain head of all Indian systems of speculation by thinkers in all ages. To form a true idea of the general trend of Indian thought one can do no better than to turn to the Upanishads for illumination. It is true that some of the best Oriental scholars in the West have written treatises on that philosophy, but none has been a satisfactory and true representation of its essential doctrines. While in some it has found a contemptuously hostile criticism, in others, who have more respect and enthusiasm, for it, it has found a great misunderstanding of the true inwardness of its conceptions. In any case, the Western scholars have failed to grasp the true spirit of the Upanishads, and it remained for an Indian thinker, scholar and critic to take

up the difficult task which would go a long way to allay the misgivings especially of the Western mind, which would again give rise to mutual respect and understanding, the crying need of the hour. This task has now been ably fulfilled by Radhakrishnan, whose exposition of the basic principles of the Upanishads is most brilliant and coherent. We cannot here give a full account of the contents of the volume, but it would perhaps be worth while to say a few words regarding some criticism which his way of interpreting the Upanishads has evoked.

In an article contributed to the *Mind* (vol. xxxv, N. S. No. 138), and now incorporated as an appendix in the second edition of the first volume of the *Indian Philosophy*, Radhakrishnan states that his criticism of the "illusion" theory of Sankara, as well as the indifference shown to the personal theism of Ramanuja, led many to think that he must have been a reveller in strange unphilosophical confusion. But this is unjustified. The author says that his endeavour has mainly been to show that the Upanishads lend themselves to divergent developments and that it is possible to give a coherent account of their teaching which in all fairness would do justice to the main principles of both Sankara and Ramanuja. "In philosophical interpretation the most coherent view is the most true". Now, in describing the nature of the Absolute or the ultimate Reality the Upanishads use such words as may lend colour to both an Absolute which may be said to be unqualified, the world being a mere accidental appearance (*vivarta*) of it, or an Absolute viewed as a concrete person, the world being the necessary expression of its being. The former may be said to lend support to Sankara's view and the latter to Ramanuja's. Radhakrishnan admits that it is difficult to decide between the two, but a reconciliation is not impossible. And he thinks that the only intelligible reconciliation between them seems to lie through the device of a duality of standpoints. Our author holds that when we transcend intellect and have an intuition of the Absolute there seems to be nothing but the Absolute, the world is but the Absolute; so the problem of the-

relation between the two does not arise. But when we view the Absolute from the human standpoint, *i.e.*, through the application of the logical categories, the Absolute appears to be a whole binding together the different elements in it. The views of Sankara and Ramanuja are the respective representation of this duality of standpoints. And Radhakrishnan holds that Sankara himself adopted the same device in explaining many apparently contradictory texts of the Upanishads.

The above device would equally solve the difficulty in properly understanding the interpretations of Sankara and Ramanuja in the case of the Vedanta also. The Vedanta Sutras are by themselves unintelligible and leave much to the interpreter. They refuse, Proteus-like, to be caught in any definite shape. So, it is no wonder that "their teaching is interpreted sometimes in the bright hues of personal theism, sometimes in the grey abstractions of absolutism". Ramanuja and Sankara have been taken to be the chief representatives of these two lines of interpretation respectively in such a hard and fast way that they have been thought irreconcilable; and not only that, it has gone so far as to give birth to many a misunderstanding which has given rise to an age-long conflict between the votaries of the two schools. But for this unfortunate state of affairs the disciples have been more responsible than the teachers, for they outdid them. Anyway, to represent the two kinds of interpretation as opposites would be a great error, they should rather be taken as complementaries. They represent but the two sides of one and the same reality.

Prof. Radhakrishnan's "The Hindu View of Life" was published next. This book constituted the course of the four lectures that he delivered under the Upton Trust at Oxford in the autumn of 1926 and was ready by 1927. This is a much smaller volume than his "Indian Philosophy," but in popularity it has surpassed all. The book has already gone through two editions and has been so popular that it has been translated into most of the important European languages, *viz.*, French, German, etc. The way in which his Upton Lectures were received when

delivered at Oxford, about which we have given some account above, gave a clear indication of the success achieved by them after publication. In a word, it has simply stirred the Christian world. In this book Radhakrishnan gives an account of the Hindu philosophy of religion and life. The basic principles of the Hindu view have found a most able and profound exponent in him. His presentation of the Hindu case has given food for thought to the war-weary West, and it bids fair to help in the solution of the racial, religious and other like problems which now face the West. And we can also do no better than noting in brief its main points in order to give an idea to the reader of its nature and content.

The first lecture deals with the nature and content of religious experience. Religion, according to the Hindu conception, is a kind of life or experience, it is the experience of reality. This experience is no mere emotional thrill or subjective fancy, "but is the response of the whole personality, the integrated self to the central reality". This experience is of a self-certifying character. But the religious seer has been compelled to justify his convictions and thus satisfy the thought of the age. The Hindu has no mistrust of reason; institution, which is the characteristic of religion and reason contains no breach in them. The sacred scriptures of the Hindus, the Vedas, are but the registers of the intuitions of the seers; but these experiences or intuitions being of a varied character their records also are many-sided. The Hindus regard the Vedas as sacred, as it is essential to every religion that its heritage should be so regarded. "The Hindu attitude to the Vedas is one of trust tempered by criticism". We have to trust the beliefs and forms which were of use to our forefathers, as they may be so to us; but however valuable these may be they have to pass through the test of our criticism, since the age has passed away giving place to a new. The Hindu philosophy of religion has an experimental basis. This basis, again, is as wide as human nature itself. Hinduism has never been a rigid and definite dogmatic creed, but "its tradition of the godward endeavour of the human spirit has been continuously

-enlarging through the ages." "The dialectic of religious advance through tradition, logic and life helps the conservation of Hinduism by providing scope for change." The Hindu tradition is for ever building. Throughout its history the leaders have been engaged in experimenting with new forms to suit new conditions. Though Hindu religious thought has undergone many a revolution and evolution, it has remained the same, the Vedantic idealism has been the standard which has given it light and guidance. "The Vedanta is not a religion, but religion itself in its most universal and deepest significance."

The next question is : What is it that is experienced ? Is it true that different seers have expressed it differently *i.e.*, they have described God, the content of this experience, in various ways, but this is intelligible on the view that religious experience is mediated psychologically. Though this is true, the Hindu seers were anxious to affirm at the same time that much of God's nature was hidden from their view. The seers hold that God's nature cannot be described in human words or language. But the human mind cannot rest here, it uses its imagination to picture God ; so the religious seers also needed the help of their imagination to express God's nature. The highest category that man can use for the purpose is that of self-conscious personality with which he is directly acquainted. So on this model God is represented as a person, but a perfect Person (*uttamapurusha*). Again, the concept of personality being constituted by the three factors of cognition, emotion and will, God is viewed as Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara, representing the three qualities respectively. God is the centre of this trinity.

The second lecture is devoted to a consideration of the Hindu attitude towards the conflict of religions. The Hindu solution of the problem is really ingenious and at the same time philosophical. Hinduism, as we have seen, has never been an inflexible or rigid creed. When the Aryans came in contact with the aborigines they accepted instead of rejecting the aboriginal gods and justified them. "Every god accepted by Hinduism is elevated and ultimately identified with the central Reality which is one

with the deeper self of man. The addition of new gods to the Hindu pantheon does not endanger it." Different sects professing different beliefs live within its fold. Hinduism has respect and good-will for all other creeds. To the Hindu what counts is conduct and not belief. Hinduism has included in its fold worshippers of different gods and followers of different rites. When other cults have been taken into it, alteration set in as the result of the influence of the higher thought. This reform has been essentially democratic. Each group has been allowed to reach the truth through its own tradition. This historic tradition is to reach the condition of its growth of spirit. True spirit of reform does not lie in mere force and threats but in suggestion and persuasion which go to change the bias of mind. The Hindus have been anxious more to bring about a change in the content than in the name. It has encouraged more to deepen the significance of one's own religious ideas. But while all revelations refer to reality, all are not equally true. Hinduism believes in the evolution of our knowledge of God. With the growth of our knowledge the conception of God also develops. Men at different levels of development must take different views of God, and as they are all offsprings of God their views deserve respect and consideration. Though views may be different the reality of the one supreme universal Spirit is never doubted. "The bewildering polytheism of the masses and the uncompromising monotheism of the classes are for the Hindu the expressions of one and the same force at different levels. Hinduism insists on our working steadily upwards and improving our knowledge of God." Toleration in the sense of acceptance has been the watch-word of Hinduism. "In the name of toleration we have carefully protected superstitious rites and customs." But though the lesser forms of religious beliefs have been tolerated, there has been "an insistence on the larger idea and the purer worship" all through. Hinduism has been a believer in the power of the spirit. Given light and guidance it is capable of breaking through all fetters which check its growth. Neither does it believe in a mechanical uniformity of belief and worship. "It

does not believe in any statutory methods of salvation". Each spirit has to bring about its own salvation in its own way. After all, conduct is essential and not creed.

This Hindu view of recognising the individuality of every group and nation is, the author says, slowly gaining ground. The two principles of respect for man and unbending devotion to truth have been the secret source of the great improvement in the Hindu religious life in the heyday of Hinduism, though for the last few centuries Hindus have miserably failed to live up to the ideal. But still the Hindu idea prevails. The way in which the world is now faced with religious intolerance with the consequent feuds it has given rise to, is simply disastrous; the solution of this problem cannot be found anywhere than in the Hindu idea just presented, and the author believes that it would be accepted in the near future.

The next two lectures deal with the Hindu Dharma, *i.e.*, the practical side of Hinduism. But before going to do so the author first refutes some of the objections that have been levelled against the Hindu ethics. The first and foremost amongst these is the doctrine of *maya* which is supposed to deny the reality of the world and thus to make all practical life meaningless and illusory. The doctrine of *maya* or *illusion* is generally ascribed to Sankara, who is regarded as a representative of the standard type of Hindu thought. The translation of *maya* into illusion has been most unfortunate and has given rise to many a misunderstanding. The author says that it is not fair to represent Sankara's doctrine as illusionism. So far as our experience goes he is a realist, he affirms the extra-mental reality of objects. The extra-mental reality of objects or the logical dualism between subject and object is not, for Sankara, final. Subject and object are but phases of the Absolute, who is at the base of all. But for matter of that God is not identical with the world, He is transcendent to it. Of course it must be admitted that one or two followers of Sankara lend countenance to the doctrine of *maya* in its illusionist sense, but that it is not the true spirit of Hindu thought.

The second objection is : If everything is God, the ethical rules are meaningless and absurd. But, according to the author, this is a wrong way of regarding the relation of God to the world. It is true that God is immanent in the world, i.e., He is present in everything, but this presence admits of degrees. He is more fully present in something than in others, God's immanence in the world does not imply that everything is God as we find it, but it has only divine potentiality. This leaves the individuals to develop or evolve and thus to lead a moral life.

Next comes the doctrine of *karma*. The author holds that it is unfortunate that the theory of Karma became confused with fatalism when people became indolent, but rightly understood it is never so. The Hindu doctrine of Karma never implies the denial of individual freedom which is the condition of all morality or moral life. It is true that the course of nature is determined by immutable laws—it is determined by necessity, that "the universe is lawful to the very core," and not merely in the external nature but in the world of mind and morals it holds true, but it does not imply a rigid and mechanical necessity. "Karma is not a mechanical principle but a spiritual necessity. It is the embodiment of the mind and will of God. God is its supervisor". In fact freedom is the truth of necessity, as Hegel has it. "While it regards the past as determined, it allows that the future is only conditioned. The spiritual element in man allows him freedom within the limits of his nature". It is true that nothing can efface our past karma, which is the element of necessity in us, but the spiritual principle in man can triumph over it, therein lies his freedom. In this freedom of human beings there is an element of unpredictability, but this does not imply caprice. Evolution may imply epigenesis.

Radhakrishnan next considers the practical side of Hinduism. In this view "Hinduism is more a way of life than a form of thought. While it gives absolute liberty in the world of thought it enjoins a strict code of practice". "Hinduism insists not on religious conformity but on a spiritual and ethical outlook in life". "Hinduism is not a

sect but a fellowship of all who accept the law of right and earnestly seek for the truth". To the Hindu, dharma is right action. Dharma etymologically means that which holds a thing and maintains it in its being. Every form of life has its own dharma, which is the law of its being.

Desires form the springs of human action, but the different activities which spring from these desires are co-ordinated, they function in interdependence, and the truth of their being is the eternal which is their perspective and which colours and determines them. Hinduism does not regard the life of desires as low and in antagonism with the higher or spiritual life, but it condemns that life which is not related to the spiritual background. Natural life or existence is not condemned in itself, it is on the contrary, regarded as a pathway to the former. The natural and the spiritual are inseparably bound up and cannot be separated without ruining both. The Upanishad says: "In darkness are they who worship only the world, but in greater darkness they who worship the infinite alone. He who accepts both saves himself from death by the knowledge of the former and attains immortality by the knowledge of the latter." In the Hindu scheme a marriage exists between the natural and the spiritual, only the latter is the light and guide of the former.

Hinduism or the Hindu dharma has been called a varnasrama dharma, and while varna or the theory of caste emphasises the social side of karma, asrama or the stages of life emphasises the individual aspect of karma. The Hindu scheme of life consisting of the four asramas brings forth prominently the idea of life as a pilgrimage to the eternal life through different stages. The four stages of life are: Brahmacharya or the student life, Garbhashtha or the life of a householder, Vanaprastha or the life of retreat and Sannyasa or the life of renunciation. The scheme is most scientific and deserves some consideration. The first period is that of training and discipline of body and mind. The student was required to live for a fixed period in the house of his teacher where different arts and sciences used to be taught him. In short, it was a period of training and preparing the plastic mind of the youth

for the life of the world. The second period is the life of a householder, and in this human beings were encouraged to enter into marital relationships, as they were not considered to be self-sufficing. Even the very Gods were married. But the distinctive feature of Hinduism is that marriage is considered sacred or spiritual, and not mere contract. Sex life is not considered low or unwholesome, but a sure preparation for the higher life of spirit. Marriage in Hindu view is a sacrament, a *samskara*, which goes to purify the soul of man. Marriage was prescribed both for the development of personality as well as for the continuance of the family ideal. It has both an individual and a social aspect. The relation between the husband and the wife is given a spiritual colouring. "Sensual love is sublimated into self-forgetful devotion". Neither the man has been represented as a tyrant, nor the woman a slave. They are partners in life. This being so, the truth or ideal of Hindu marriage is monogamy, though polygamy also is recognised. "In the absence of absolute perfection we have to be content with approximations. We need not, however, confound the higher with the lower". The idea of marriage being spiritual marital relation is regarded as indissoluble. In the Hindu scheme there is no recognition of divorce system. Modern conditions in the West are responsible for the large number of divorce cases. The incompatibility between man and woman is more an outcome of wrong ideal, lack of toleration and patience, and the predominance of the individual will. Life at the present time has grown more instinctive and passionate. Though the idea of divorce is not very modern, the philosophy that underlies it is rather new. "Disguised feeling is masquerading as advanced thought." The third stage of life arises when the responsibilities of home are finished. Manu says that when one becomes a grandfather, or one's skin begins to show wrinkles, or one's hair turns grey, one must enter the third stage. This stage is really a preparation for the true life of the spirit. In the haunt of a forest retreat, away from the bustle of life, one meditates on the higher truths. Here the individuality or the individual side of man has a higher claim than the social one. He is to

achieve his salvation through means of his own individual efforts. The stage of *sannyasa* is the final one. The chief aim of the *sannyasin* is more to attain a state of disinterestedness in worldly affairs and cares than to free himself from these. He develops a spirit of equanimity. These are the free spirits of the world in its true sense. In some forms of Christianity and Buddhism it is found that the life of the world has been held to be inferior to the life of the monk; but Hinduism does not condemn the life of the house-holder, on the other hand it has been extolled highly. According to the Hindu view of life every state being necessary is good. These free spirits are not indifferent to the welfare of the world, as is generally supposed, but, on the other hand, their freedom which gives them courage to suffer, sacrifice and die makes of them the true reformers of the world.

Caste is the next problem. Though the institution of caste has now degenerated into a machine of oppression and intolerance, and has given rise to many an evil from which the Hindu society is now suffering, yet its basic principles are sound. The system of caste is the outcome of tolerance and trust. This basic principle may seem paradoxical, but this is the underlying truth. This institution "illustrates the spirit of comprehensive synthesis characteristic of the Hindu mind with its faith in the collaboration of races and the co-operation of cultures." The origin of the institution of caste is really complex. Castes are of many kinds—tribal, racial, sectarian and occupational. The Sanskrit synonym of caste is *varna*, and this originally refers to colour. A study of the past history of India shows that India has been subjected to successive race invasions. Even before these race invasions India had various racial groups as its inhabitants. No other country in the world has had such racial problems to face as India. Now, the solution of the problem admits of four alternatives, viz., extermination, subordination, identification or harmonisation.

The first method of extermination has often been adopted in the history of the world, but the principle of

which it is based is found to be quite unjustifiable. What a loss the policy of extermination entails is not realised by the protagonists of this theory. To all intents and purposes it may be taken that a race in a very low stage of development has not made any contribution to progress, but it is not known what they have in potentiality. The history of the development of the protagonists themselves bears testimony to this. When extermination has been impossible the powerful or conquering races have adopted the second alternative of subordination. But this is also based on a very defective theory. We know to our cost what it means, and the superior races to be true to their conscience have also to admit its evils. The highest idealism requires of superior races to give equal opportunities to unequal groups, to respect the independence of every people and to lead the backward ones to light and culture. In this respect the Hindus adopted the only safe course of democracy. Each racial group was allowed to develop the best in it without impeding others' progress. The Hindus bore an attitude of respect to all. It is true that the Vedic Aryans started with a narrow outlook and regarded themselves as a sort of chosen people, but they soon developed a universal intention and also a universal ethical code. The Aryan or Hindu civilisation enlightened the aborigines and was itself modified by theirs. The tribes shared in the larger life of Hinduism with all its opportunities but they had also their responsibilities to contribute to its thoughts, moral advancement and spiritual worth. They were raised above the welter of savagery and imbued with the spirit of gentleness. The common soil, interests and surroundings, not only gave the tribes opportunities to improve but also to adapt themselves to each other. The law of use and wont distinguished one group from another. Caste is really custom. However crude and false the customs and beliefs of one group may seem to another, it cannot be denied that they help the community to grow in peace within itself and in harmony with others. It is a point of social honour for every member to marry within his own caste. "Caste was the answer of Hinduism to the forces

pressing on it from outside. It was the instrument by which Hinduism civilised the different tribes it took in."

The Hindu spirit brought about a gradual racial harmony. Hindu society "stands for the ordered complexity, the harmonised multiplicity, the many in one which is the clue to the structure of the universe." Hindu society is regarded as an organic whole. This is the most important point to be noted in this respect. Human society is an organic whole in which the parts and the whole are organically related, the whole is present in each part, while each part is indispensable to the whole. A society is an organic unity of different groups working for the fulfilment of its wants, and this working for a common end gives them a sense of unity and social brotherhood. The cultural and the spiritual (Brahmins), the military and the political (Kshatriyas), the economic classes (Vaiśyas), and the unskilled workers (Sudras), constitute the fourfold caste organisation. Each has its own specific social purpose and function, its own code and tradition. For the well-being of the society the functions of the different castes were regarded equally important. Each has its own perfection to contribute. The caste rules brought about an adjustment of the different groups. The Brahmins were allowed freedom and leisure to develop spiritual ideals. They were to be free from material cares, so gifts to them were encouraged and even enjoined. They were consulted by the State, but not bound by it. As advisors of the government they were to point out the true interests of society, as they were supposed to be above class interests and prejudices. The political and economic life of the society was to conform to the spiritual leadership given by the Brahmins. Spirituality was to be the motive-power and the end of the Hindu society. But in spite of its attachment to the principle of non-violence, there must be individuals to break the peace as long as society did not reach the highest level, and for the suppression of rowdiness force was necessary. So Hindu society made room for a group dedicated to the use of force. Thus the Kshatriyas arose. The Vaiśyas

- the economic group—were required to suppress greed and realise the moral responsibilities of wealth. In the golden days of Hinduism the possessors of wealth used to regard it as a social trust and used to devote it for the welfare of the society in various ways. The maxim, "to mix religion and business is to spoil two good things", had no sympathy with the Hindus. Hinduism stands for eternal values in life. The unskilled workers and peasants form the proletariat or the Sudras. The four castes represent men of thought, men of action, men of feeling, and others in whom none of these is highly developed.

Thus, though each caste is centred in itself, yet all work alongside one another in harmony and co-operation. Cold and cruel competition in social life is not encouraged, as it is not the law. A man born in a particular caste is trained to its manner. Each individual is said to have his own specific nature fitting him to his own specific function, and changes of function are not encouraged. Since it is difficult to determine what the aptitudes of individuals are, heredity and training are used to fix their calling. Though this is the rule, exceptions are freely allowed. Even a man belonging to the lowliest caste has become a spiritual leader and a Brahmin a warrior. Each caste's vocation was never considered as degrading servitude determined by purely economic motive. The perfecting of its specific function is the spiritual aim which each caste sets itself, and the worker fulfils himself in and through his work. In the near future India has to face the perils of industrialism. In the factory, work is mere labour, it does not satisfy the soul. The more the work becomes mechanical and monotonous the worker should have larger leisure and better equipment for its use. Mechanical work should be better paid than that of the artist or the statesman, for in the latter case work is its own reward. In ancient India the Brahmins, the preservers of the treasures of spiritual knowledge, were the least paid. There seems to exist some justice in such an arrangement, greater sympathy should be shown to those whose work is soul-deadening. But economic factors should not determine a man's rank. The spiritual

aim of society should be emphasised and service of one's fellows recognised as a religious obligation. The members of different groups should share a certain community of feeling, a sense of belonging together for good or for ill. Then they would realise their potentialities to the full. The individual should look beyond his own particular interests and desires. He should not be judged by his economic success and the amount of wealth he amasses, but appraised by spiritual values and by his services to the community. This organic theory of society is receiving greater attention now.

Such are some of the central principles of the Hindu faith. It is true that listlessness reigns now where life was once like a bubbling spring, but to say that India has stood unchanged since then is totally wrong. There has been progress, though continuity with the past has never been broken. "There has been no such thing as a uniform, stationary, unalterable Hinduism whether in point of belief or practice. Hinduism is a movement, not a position; a process, not a result; a growing tradition, not a fixed revelation". In the course of its history Hinduism had to undergo many a process of readjustment and the present situation is also a repetition of that. An institution that is good for one stage becomes inadequate for another. The law of relativity holds good everywhere. After a long period of slumber Hinduism is now in a creative period. What is at present needed is not a surrender of its basic principles, which is supposed to hold good for all time, but a restatement of them with special reference to the complex situation at the present time. The ancient faith is now looked upon with fresh eyes.

This is Prof. Radhakrishnan's account of the Hindu view of life. This presentment of Hinduism may not be accepted as orthodox, but Sir Francis Younghusband says that it is "valuable as indicating the direction in which Hinduism is likely to move under the impress of the West". (*Dawn in India*, p. 283). And Prof. Radhakrishnan is strongly influencing the movement. This has been termed "New Hinduism". But its meaning should not be misunderstood. It is really pouring new wine into the old

Hindu wine-skins. And Radhakrishnan thinks that this attempt of his would never destroy the eternal verities of Hinduism. In a recently published volume on "The Contemporary Thought of India" Dr. Underwood, the author, on the other hand, thinks that it would totally destroy Hinduism. Nay, the present-day Hinduism, as he would like to call it, is not really Hinduism, but Hinduism as coloured or modified by Christianity. This modification of Hinduism has been, according to him, far-reaching through the steady infiltration of Christian ideas and ideals, whether the Hindus admit it or not. For this purpose he has dealt with the writings of Tagore, Gandhi, etc., who are taken to be the spokesmen of the present-day Hinduism, to show how Christianity has powerfully affected their thought, in the case of many through their education in Christian schools and colleges, and in the case of others through their study of Western literature and thought. And in the case of Radhakrishnan it would be most easy for Dr. Underwood to show the sure indication of Christian influence through his education in Christian Missionary school and college all through, which we have mentioned above. What Prof. Radhakrishnan speaks as the central principles of Hinduism, Dr. Underwood would regard those as not real, but it is really reading as much Christianity as possible into Hindu ideas and ideals. "The Hinduism of the Hindu View of Life," he remarks, "is not Hinduism as it is, or ever has been; but as Professor Radhakrishnan would have it to be after he has remoulded it nearer to his heart's desire." And this remoulding in his mind, is obviously by Christian ideas and ideals. In Dr. Underwood's view Hinduism is really a religious syncretism, it has no authoritative creed. It is really what he would perhaps call an "omnivorous" system. Both in the ideas and ideals of the present day Hindu thinkers Dr. Underwood finds unmistakable traces of Christian influence, conscious or unconscious. * * *

Radhakrishnan is aware of such a view, and in answer to this he has simply to say that to be true to history we should hold that "each nation has had its own share of the inner light and spiritual discovery. No cultural or

religious imperialist, who has the settled conviction that he alone has all the light and others are groping in darkness, can be a safe guide in comparative studies".

At the request of the Bishop of Liverpool Prof. Radhakrishnan wrote a pamphlet on "The Religion We Need," in the "Affirmations" series published by Ernest Benn Ltd. The aim of the series is said to be "an inductive approach to religion based on the pursuit of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. The writers are actively engaged in that pursuit through the channels of religious ministry, literature, politics, philanthropy, science and art. The writers recognise the impulse towards all such achievement to be akin to the Creative Spirit, though they would not all give the same account of the inspiration they experience or observe". In a word, its aim is really to determine the place of God in the modern world.

Our author points out that the present is a transition time. The application of scientific methods to the facts of religion has brought about an unsettlement in religious beliefs. The wonderful achievements of science at the present time in the domain of physical nature have sapped the roots of the faith in a transcendent God. The world is now looked upon as a vast mechanism in which the natural forces are the sole determinants of all the changes. Such a mechanical explanation now extends to all the departments of science, physical and mental. Now, to escape from such a cold view those anxious for religion are trying to find out different ways of exit. First, we have the fundamentalists who would ask us to shut our eyes to the facts of modern thought and inquiry, go by the beaten track and repeat blindly the sayings of the illustrious dead. To these education is the greatest calamity, ignorance is bliss. But our author holds that it is a very weak doctrine and seems to have no future. Then we have a second sect, e. g. Durkheim and his followers, which sees in religion merely a social phenomenon. Truth is social utility. The chief aim of religion in this view is the enhancement of life, it has little to do with the discovery of truth. "We can use God though we cannot know him". But to such a view our author says, "No-

amount of earnest ethical exhortation can take the place of religion". Then, again, there are some who uphold a sort of a lazy scepticism. They comfort themselves with the view that truth is unattainable, as any evidence for its establishment is inconclusive. But though unable to believe they are also afraid to doubt God, the ultimate Truth. So they would on occasions be inclined to give God the benefit of doubt. Again, there are a few who make no secret to repudiate any divine or spiritual reality. These are the atheists. They find no purpose in the whirl of the world, anything may happen at any moment and nobody knows where all these would lead to. The more heroic among these would like us to make the best use of the world with all its imperfections.

But what we have said above of the anti-religious attitude of science is only an apparent one. The author tells us that it would be wrong to deny the religious implications of science. What he would have is that science is opposed to the dogmas of religion and not to the true religious spirit. "Religion as revelation or dogma has no appeal to the believer in science". The religion which starts with the assumption of God and infers his characteristics therefrom, results in mere scholasticism or the deductive development of dogma. Science is opposed to such *apriori* schemes. It starts from creation and not from the creator or God. "It approaches the problems of religion in an attitude of empiricism or experimentalism". Both in its temper and leanings science is essentially spiritual. Science has not abolished the mysteries of the world, it has rather deepened them. The scientific theory of evolution, both biological and cosmological, illustrates this fact.

Science is incomplete in itself and looks to something beyond itself. This fact is in agreement with the data of religious consciousness on its main issue. From the beginning of religious consciousness men have felt the reality of this something at the back of nature as God. Human life is a constant quest for God—"the ineradicable religious instinct in human nature finds fulfilment in the

consciousness of a spiritual reality at the back of the cosmic process." Though it is most difficult to grasp this reality, and its definition impossible, yet we may perhaps be sure that it is no remote ground of the universe, it is the immanent spirit working in and through it. As we are to interpret the unknown by the known, we are justified in regarding it as the self, though an infinite one, who is at the same time the self of the universe. But still our conception should be taken at best as a mere symbol of the ultimate and the ineffable. The soul of man is infinite as it seeks the infinite, and it has unlimited possibilities in itself. Man's reactions to the infinite environment cannot be reduced to limited formulas.

God or the Supreme is but one, though He is called by various names. He is supremely impartial, his inspiration is not confined to any age or race, his revelation is larger than any sacred book or sets of them, and he has raised up teachers and saints in every land. There cannot be a single religion, or one set of dogmas or one cult or one system of ceremonies for all mankind. The very idea is illogical. Religion represents the soul of a people, its peculiar spirit, thought and temperament. It undergoes evolution through the advance in general knowledge and moral sense, until it finds its culmination in the fullest development of the self or spirit. Religious life is nothing but the "spiritual certainty offering us strength and solace in the hour of need and sorrow". Such a religious life, again, cannot be attained without deep meditation and strenuous self-discipline. A spiritual attitude, which is the heart of religion, should be developed, and the world of life and sense should be lived in that spirit. Now, the idea of self-perfection which is the end of religion, should not be confined to the mere individual but it should also take hold of the society as a whole. Brotherhood of man in the name of religion should be the ideal aim. "Religion is not a simple spiritual state of the individual. It is the practice of the divine rule among men". The world is in deep need of such an aim at the present time. And this can only be achieved by a more vivid and deeper sense of the one universal God—so Radhakrishnan thinks.

The last book to appear under Prof. Radhakrishnan's name was "Kalki" in 1929. This appeared in the famous *To-day and To-morrow* series published by Messrs. Kegan Paul Ltd. of London. The book is a small one, but nonetheless it is characterised by the same charm and vigour of style and thought as are found in his other volumes. The book deals with the future of the present civilisation, a problem of supreme interest to the age. It contains a trenchant criticism of a fact-ridden world for its dependence on science without reflexion.

Civilisation, the author tells us, is passing through one of its periodic crises to-day. Everything is now in a melting pot. But the unsettlement and confusion everywhere, in every department of life, indicate that humanity is about to take a new step forward. Now, one of the chief factors to produce such a state is modern science. Of late the progress of science has been too fast and its range too wide and deep for quick adaptation. "Though humanity has assumed a uniform outer body, it is still without a single animating spirit. The world is not of one mind." But as on the one hand, the mechanical inventions of science have provided a common basis for future civilisation, on the other, the breakdown of the traditional systems of thought, belief and practice has been the necessary preliminary for the building of a spiritual unity. To view rightly, mankind is a single organism, so civilisation of the world also must have a single goal, i.e., there must also be a unity of civilisation. But this unity should not be sought in uniformity but in harmony, in co-operation and not identification, in which all races, creeds, cultures are accommodated.

The book is divided into three chapters. The first deals with the "negative results" produced by the scientific invasion in all the departments of human institution. In the author's view the universal invasion of science has upset traditions and standards without supplying any others to take their place. So the second deals with the "Problem." In his view philosophy in its larger sense "is the unseen foundation on which the structure of a civilisation rests. It is the soul which slowly

builds for itself a body." The ancient Hindus and the Greeks agreed in regarding the individual as a replica of the universe. The human self is a trinity, broadly speaking, consisting of body, mind and spirit. Our physical structure testifies to our animal and vegetable ancestry. Some of our mental qualities also indicate our kinship with the animal world. But man is more than an animal, our spiritual aspirations distinguish us from the animal. Our animal propensities are always striving to fulfil themselves in us, and when all these are fully satisfied we have the full development of our animal nature. But to identify the self with the body and the life-purpose with physical development would show our barbarity. A community in which greater importance is attached to mind than life and body is called higher in the scale of development. But this is not the highest. "Unless the mind is interpreted as one with spirit, we have not reached the ideal of civilisation." The mentality or mental life that prevails now is at a low level. "Being the slaves of conventions, we are servile in soul". The society in which such a mentality prevails cannot be truly called civilised. In it the higher humanistic ideals of mind and spirit are not recognised. It is true that the interests of body and mind should be recognised but these are not ends in themselves. "It is the transformation of the individual into the universal outlook, the linking up of our daily life with the eternal purpose that makes us truly human". We have now "the assertion of mind, over life and matter and not yet of spirit over mind, life and body". Empire after empire was established, civilisation after civilisation arose but all have now perished. And why? Through spiritual bankruptcy. The survival of the Asiatic civilisations through many a catastrophe shows the life-giving character of human and spiritual values. A civilisation triumphs not by physical power but by the might of the spirit, and when it falls it is through the lack of spiritual vigour and vitality. But there is no need to despair of our race in spite of its present decadence. The advent of Kalki would see the recognition of human and spiritual values in their fullest sense. And with such a whole spiritual out-

look the author requires us to "reconstruct" the human institutions, which forms the subject-matter of the last chapter of his book.

The Hibbert Lectures which Prof. Radhakrishnan delivered on "An Idealist View of Life" in England in 1929 have not yet been published as a volume, but on account of the profound importance of the subject we can do no better than quote from a review of them published in the *Spectator* (February 15, 1930). Writing on the subject Mr. Joad says :

The lecturer began with an analysis of the doctrine of organised religion in the modern world. The story of warring Churches and irreconcilable ecclesiastics, of dwindling congregations and public apathy is sufficiently familiar, and there is no need to repeat it here. What was new was the lecturer's insistence on the fact that the phenomena with which we are familiar are not peculiar to this country; they are not even peculiar to the Christian religion; they belong to an age rather than to a creed, and could be paralleled from a survey of Mahomedanism, Hinduism or of any of the great religions of the world.

For the present position science is partly responsible. It is not that science is hostile to the spiritual truths of religion; to these it is and must remain irrelevant; but it has completely destroyed the traditional conceptions of the physical universe upon the basis of which great religions were built up, and with which they are inextricably entangled. Hence, traditional beliefs are no longer able to command the respect of educated men. They have withered in the environment created by modern knowledge, and been replaced by a wistful agnosticism. The word "wistful" is significant. It is not that people do not wish to believe; on the contrary, the dethronement of the old gods has left a vacuum in men's lives, which is in turn responsible for the aimlessness of much of modern life. In a world without purpose nothing seems worth while because a world without purpose is also a world without values. People, in fact are suffering from an unsatisfied need to believe.

Hence arises a host of religious substitutes, Pragmatism, Humanism and the doctrines of Creative Evolution, which seek to appease the hunger of man's souls by assuring mankind of its fundamental importance in the universe. Whatever may be the truth of these beliefs taken as accounts of the universe, they cannot be said to afford an adequate substitute for the consolations of religion. To conceive of the human race as the centre of the cosmic process is to deprive that process of significance, while to those who do not find Man as adequate object of worship, the conception of his ultimate perfectibility will seem trivial and petty, making Man himself smaller by robbing the universe which he contemplates of all its splendour. What, then, remains?

The positive contribution of Prof. Radhakrishnan's lectures consists in an affirmation of the fundamental validity of the mystic's experience, and of the reality which it reveals. In ordinary life we acknowledge two ways of knowing; there is the way of sensory experience, which acquaints us with the features of the physical world, and there is the way of the thinking intellect. But there is a third, the way of intuition. When we experience the beauty of a landscape or a picture, enter into communion with another personality in friendship or love, or recognise the value of a morally good action, our mode of apprehension is neither sensory nor intellectual but intuitional. The characteristic of intuitional knowledge is that instead of standing apart from its object, it transcends the distinction between self and object. In intuitional apprehension we literally enter into that which we apprehend, subject and object become fused and form a unity.

This way of knowledge has been pre-eminently the way of the mystics in all ages, nor is it beyond us. In aesthetic appreciation, in moral experience and in the inspiration of genius we experience in beauty, goodness and truth partial aspects of that reality which the mystics have known as God. But this knowledge is possible only to developed personalities. The cultivation of good taste is, we admit, a necessary preliminary to the realisation of what is best in literature and art, and it is only the personality which is refined by discipline and enriched by meditation that is capable of religious experience. The path to which Prof. Radhakrishnan points is not, he admits, an easy one, but, unless I misinterpret him, it is the only way out of our present *impasse*.

As a result of the above publications Prof. Radhakrishnan is now recognised as one of the foremost thinkers and writers of the age. He has created such an impression in the West that it is no wonder that he has been recognised as "the philosopher of the new India." The West has now nothing but praise and admiration for this Indian savant. So he deserves well of India.

THE HEART OF HINDUISM

I propose in this paper to describe, not defend, the central features of the faith of the Hindus, so as to bring out in a short compass its different sides of philosophical doctrine, religious experience, ethical character, and traditional faith.

Philosophical Basis—The Hindu religion is marked by an eminently rational character. Throughout the bewildering maze of dreamy hopes and practical renunciations, stratest dogmas and reckless adventures of spirit, throughout the four or five millenniums of ceaseless metaphysical and theological endeavour, the Hindu thinkers have tried to grapple with the ultimate problems in a spirit of loyalty to truth and feeling for reality. The Brahmanical civilisation is so called since it is directed by the Brahmin thinkers, trained to judge issues without emotion and base their conclusions on the fundamentals of experience.

The feature of the world which let the Hindu thinkers to raise the question of the real was its passing away. The world open to our objective vision seemed to them an endless surpassing of itself. They asked, Is this passing away all, or does the doom which engulfs things meet its check : nywhere ? And they answered, there is something

in the world which is not superseded, an imperishable Absolute, *Brahman*. This experience of infinity is given to all on some occasions, when we catch glimpses of the mighty secret, and feel the brooding presence of the larger self which mantles us in glory. Even in the tragic moments of life, when we feel ourselves to be poor and orphaned, the majesty of the God in us makes us feel that the wrong and the sorrow of the world are but incidents in a greater drama which will end in power, glory and love. The Upanishads declare, "If there were no spirit of joy in the Universe, who could live and breathe in this world of life?" Philosophically, the real is the self-identical *Brahman* revealing itself in all, becoming the permanent background of the world-process. Religiously it is envisaged as the Divine Self-consciousness, pregnant with the whole course of the world, with its evolutions and involutions. Throughout its long career, the oneness of the ultimate spirit has been the governing ideal of the Hindu religion. The Rigveda tells us of one Supreme Reality, *Ekam sat*, of which the learned speak variously. The Upanishads make out that the one *Brahman* is called by many names, according to the spheres of reality in which it is seen to function. The conception of *Trimurti* arises in the epic period, and is well established by the age of the puranas. The analogy of human consciousness, with its threefold activity of cognition, emotion, and will, suggests the view of the

Supreme as *sat*, *chit*, and *ananda*—reality, wisdom, and joy. The three *gunas* of *sattva* or equanimity, born of wisdom, *rajas* or energy, which is the outcome of spirited feeling, and *tamas* or heaviness, due to lack of enlightenment and control, are aspects of all existence, and even God is not considered to be an exception to this law of the triplicity of all being. The three functions of *srishhti* or creation, *sthiti* or maintenance, and *laya* or destruction are traced to the three *gunas* of *rajas*, *sattva*, and *tamas*. *Vishnu*, the preserver of the Universe, is the Supreme Spirit dominated by the quality of *sattva*. *Brahma*, the creator of the Universe, is the Supreme dominated by the quality of *rajas*, and *Siva*, the destroyer of the Universe, is the Supreme dominated by the quality of *tamas*. The three qualities of the one Supreme are developed into three distinct personalities, and each of the latter is said to function through its own respective *sakti* or energy, and so we have answering to *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Siva*, *Saraswati Lakshmi*, and *Kali*. Strictly speaking, all these qualities and functions are so well balanced in the one Supreme that it cannot be said to possess any quality at all.* The one incomprehensible God who is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent appears to different minds in different ways.† An

* *Rajogunah smrito brahma, vishnoh sattvagunatmakah, tamogunah statha rudro, nirgunah parameswarah.*

† Cf. Ps. xviii. 25-26.

ancient text says that forms are given to the formless Absolute for the benefit of the aspirants.

With the openness of mind characteristic of the philosophical temper, the Hindus believe in the relativity of the creeds to the general character of the people who profess them. Religion is not a mere theory of the supernatural which we can put on or off as we please. It is an expression of the spiritual experience of the race, a record of its social evolution, an integral element of the society in which it is found. That different people should profess different faiths is not unnatural. It is all a question of taste and temperament. *Ruchinam vaichitryat*. When the Aryans met the natives of the soil, who were worshipping all sorts of deities, they did not feel called upon to supplant their faiths all on a sudden. After all, all men are seeking after the one Supreme. According to the Bhagavadgita, God will not refuse the aspirant's wishes, simply because they have not felt the power of His highest nature. Any attempt at a rapid passage from one set of rules to another would involve a violent breach with the past, and consequently confusion and chaos. The great teachers of the world who possess a sufficient sense of the historical do not attempt to save the world in their own generation by forcing their advanced notions on those who cannot understand or appreciate them. Even so exacting an ethical teacher as Jesus implicitly justified Moses for legally

demanding from the Israelites something less in the matter of divorce than the highest ideal required—because of the hardness of their hearts. Look at the uncompromising words of Mark x 11 ff. and Luke xvi. 18, and the saving clauses introduced in Matthew v 32 and viv. 9. The Hindu thinkers, while they themselves practised a very high ideal, understood the unreadiness of the people for it and so took to careful tending instead of wild forcing. They admitted the lower gods, whom the masses ignorantly worshipped, and urged that they were all subordinate to the one Supreme. “While some men find their gods in the waters, others in the heavens, others in the objects of the world, the wise find the true God whose glory is manifest everywhere, in the Atman.” Another verse says: “The man of action finds his God in fire, the man of feeling in the heart, the feeble-minded in the idol, and the strong in his spirit finds God everywhere.”*

Hindu systems of philosophy and religion recognise the periodical evolution and involution of the world representing the diastole of the one universal heart, which is ever at rest and ever active. The whole world is a manifestation of God. Sayana observes, that all things whatsoever are

* “Apsu deva manushyanam, divi deva manishinam | batanam Kashtaloshateshu, buddhastvatmani devatah|. Agnou Kriyavato devo, hridi devo manishinam | pratimasvalpabuddh:nam, Jnanti nam sarvatah sivah.” See Bhagavan Das: *Valdika Dharma*, which has a number of relevant texts.

vehicles for the manifestation of the supreme spirit.* These beings are distinguished into different grades. "Amongst beings, those that breathe are high; amongst these they that have developed mind; among them those that use their knowledge; while the highest are those who are possessed by the sense of the unity of all life in Brahman."† The one foundational spirit is revealing itself throughout these divergences of form.

The infinite in man is not satisfied by the fashion of the finite world that passes away. Our troubles are due to the fact that we do not realise the God in us. Freedom is our possession, if we escape from all that is transient and finite in us. The more our life manifests the infinite in us, the higher are we in the scale of beings. The most intense manifestations are called the avatars or the incarnations of God. These are not out of the way, miraculous revelations of God, but only higher manifestations of the supreme principle, differing from the lower general ones in degree only. The Gita says, though God lives and moves in all, He manifests Himself in a special degree in things which are splendid. The Rishis and the Buddhas, the Prophets and the Messiahs, are intense revelations of the universal self. The Gita holds out a promise that they will appear whenever they are needed. When the downward materialist tendency

* Paramatmanah sarvepi padarthah avirbhavopadhyah.

† *Manu*, I.

dominates life, a Rama or a Krishna, a Buddha or a Jesus comes upon the scene to restore the disturbed harmony of righteousness. In these men who break the power of sense, unseal the heart of love, and inspire us with a love of truth and righteousness, we have intense concentrations of God. They reveal to us the way, the truth, and the life. They of course forbid the blind worship of themselves, since it retards the realisation of the great self. Rama considers himself to be nothing more than a son of man.* A Hindu who knows anything of his faith is ready to offer homage and reverence to all helpers of humanity. He believes that God may be incarnated in any man, even as He was in Jesus or Buddha. If the Christian thinkers admit that men may have access to God and be saved, other than through the mediatorship of Jesus, the Hindu will heartily subscribe to the essential features of the religion of Jesus. The divine manifestation is not an infringement of man's personality. On the contrary, it is the highest possible degree of man's natural self-expression, since the true nature of man is divine.

The aim of life is the gradual revelation in our human existence of the eternal in us. The general progress is governed by the law of Karma,

* *Atmanam manusham manye ramam dasarathamajam.* "And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your father, even he who is in heaven." Matthew xxiii.; cf. Mark x. 18.

or moral causation. The Hindu religion does not believe in a God who from his judgment-seat weighs each case separately and decides on its merits. He does not administer justice from without, enhancing or remitting punishment according to his sweet will. God is *in* man, and so the law of Karma is organic to man's nature. Every moment man is on his trial, and every honest effort will do him good in his eternal endeavour. The character that we build will continue into the future until we realise our oneness with God. The children of God in whose eyes a thousand years are as a day, need not be disheartened if the goal of perfection is not attained in one life. Rebirth is accepted by all Hindus. The world is sustained by our errors. The forces that integrate creation are our broken lives which require to be renewed. The Universe has appeared and disappeared times without number in the long past, and will continue to be dissolved and reformed through unimaginable eternities to come.

Religious Experience :—The effort of religion is to enable man to realise the divine in him, not merely as a formula or a proposition, but as the central fact of his being, by growing into oneness with it. The way to reach this religious experience cannot be prescribed. The soul of man whose nature is infinite has unlimited possibilities in it. The God whom it seeks is equally infinite and wide. The reactions of an infinite soul to an infinite environ-

ment cannot be reduced to limited forms. The Hindu thinkers recognise that the exhaustless variety of life cannot be confined to fixed moulds. A familiar text declares: "As the birds float in the air, as the fish swim in the sea, leaving no traces behind, even so are the paths to God traversed by the seekers of spirit."* The Rishis of the Upanishads, the prophets of Israel, and the founders of religions have heard God's voice and felt His presence. God is supremely impartial to His devotees, whatever form of address and approach they may adopt. "Whoever comes to me through whatsoever form, I reach him," says the Lord in the Gita.

However, distinctions are made on the basis of threefold activity of human consciousness, into the *Jnanamarga*, or the path of knowledge and illumination, *Bhaktimarga*, or the path of faith and devotion, and *Karmamarga*, or the path of work and service. Thought, feeling, and will are not isolated faculties, but only distinguishable aspects of experience. Each of them makes its own contribution to the whole, and is penetrated by the others. The three—right knowledge, right desire, and right action—go together. The first reveals to us the truth, the second instils a love for it, and the third moulds life. Mere knowledge, unvivified by the warmth of feeling, leads to icy coldness of

* On this whole question, see the chapter on the *Bhagavadgita* in my book on *Indian Philosophy*, Allen & Unwin.

heart; mere emotion, unlit by knowledge, is hysteria; mere action, unguided by wisdom and uninspired by love, is meaningless ritual or feverish unrest. All the three enter into the integral experience of a perfect life. Yet as the emphasis on the three sides is changing in different men, they approach the problem of life from different sides.

The Gita says, "There is no purifier like unto *Jnana*, or wisdom." "This *Jnana* is not dialectical learning, which is dismissed as mere "words" in the famous dialogue in the Upanishads between Narada, the representative of encyclopædic learning, and Sanatkumara, the true knower of the self. Man in his essential nature is freedom of spirit and wisdom. Our limitations shut us away from the reality of ourselves and subject us to error. The real question for logic is not, how or why the individual knows, but how or why he fails to know? Error is due to our limitations. Intellectual growth consists in breaking down these limitations when we directly experience reality. This kind of *Jnana*, which is independent of symbols and senses, is life living itself, in the very heart of reality. Conceptual construction and logical learning may be useful in leading us to the true wisdom. The Gita insists on an intuitive insight, accompanied by rational knowledge *jnanam vijnana-sahitam*. Without this logical support, intuition may turn out to be mere emotional subjectivity..

The author of the Gita, by his saving clause, suggests that the direct consciousness of reality has universality about it. We can attain this experience of reality by a prayerful attitude. If we kill our intellectual conceit and acquire a receptive frame of mind, we shall lay ourselves open to the breeze from heaven. The Yoga discipline is intended to train the mind to hear the mighty voice of the silence within. We then feel our identity with the universal self, the Atman in us.

The cognitive pursuit of God is rather slow and painful. "The Father and Maker of this whole it is hard to find, and when one has found Him, to declare Him to all his impossible."* Our life is so short and the search is so slow. We cannot afford to wait. We are in a hurry to see. We wish to accept some faiths which will sustain us in life and help us to go about, free from doubt, acting and achieving. The impatience of the people to reach God is the opportunity for the quack who promises speedy salvation to those who believe in him. Superstition and magic become the daily bread of common people. In the Brahmanical system, reason does not completely abdicate. The sense of truth controls the life of the people. The highest truths of philosophy are dressed up in fables and stories, intelligible to the ordinary understanding that "all may safely cross beyond the difficult and dangerous places of life, that all

* Plato: *Timæus*, 29 c.

may see the face of happiness, that all may attain to right knowledge, and all may rejoice everywhere."* The stories of the puranas enable the weak of mind to appreciate the highest good, and help the building up of the inner spirit.

Accepting all the forms of worship that prevailed in the country, the Hindu thinkers arranged them in a scale leading to the highest form of divine worship, which is the practice of the presence of God. A verse in the Siva purana reads, "The highest state is the natural realisation of God's presence, the second in rank is mediation and contemplation, the third is the worship of symbols which are reminders of the Supreme, and the fourth is performance of ritual and pilgrimages to sacred places."† Idol-worship is unknown in the Rigveda. It obviously came into vogue later. It has always been recognized to be relative to an imperfect stage of development. Man is anthropomorphic, and is inclined to conceive God in vivid and pictorial form. He cannot express his mental attitude except through symbolism and art. However inadequate the symbols may be as expressions of the real, they are tolerated so long as they help the human spirit in its effort after the Divine.

* "Sarvastaratu durgani, sarvo bhadraṇi paśyatu | sarvastad buddhiḥ mapnotu sarvassarvatra nandatu." Bhagavata purana; cf. Spinoza's saying that "the highest good is common to all and all may equally enjoy it."

† Uttamasahasajavastha, dvitiya dhyana-dharana | tritiya pratīkmapuja homayatra chaturdhika.

The symbol need not be superseded so long as it suggests the right standpoint. There is a beautiful defence of image-worship, quoted from Maximus of Tyre, in Prof. Gilbert Murray's *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, which excellently sums up the Hindu's attitude to symbolic worship: "God Himself, the father and fashioner of all that is, older than the sun or the sky, greater than time and eternity, and all the flow of being, is unnameable by any lawgiver, unutterable by any voice, not to be seen by any eye. But we, being unable to apprehend His essence, use the help of sounds and names, and pictures, of beaten gold and ivory and silver, of plants and rivers, mountain-peaks and torrents, yearning for the knowledge of Him, and in our weakness naming all that is beautiful in this world after His nature—just as happens to earthly lovers. To them the most beautiful sight will be the actual lineaments of the beloved, but for remembrance' sake they will be happy in the sight of a lyre, a little spear, a chair perhaps, or a running ground, or anything in the world that wakens the memory of the beloved. Why should I further examine and pass judgment about Images? Let men know what is divine, let them know; that is all. If a Greek is stirred to the remembrance of God by the art of Pheidias, an Egyptian by paying worship to animals, another man by a river, another by fire—I have no anger for their divergences; only let them know, let

them love, let them remember."* These words so true, so tender, and so tolerant, jar on our ears, accustomed to hear dull dogmatics and fanatic falsehoods. If the symbolic function of the idol is overlooked, and if the metaphor is taken literally, the true God whom we are seeking to realise appears as He is not. The thinking Hindu does not forget the instrumental character of idol worship. The Yogis see God in Self and not in the images.†

Realising as it does the force of the lower forms of worship on the principle of milk for babes and meat for men, Hinduism has developed a religious atmosphere permeated by the highest philosophic wisdom as well as symbolic worship, round which much glorious art has gathered. It has room for all men of all grades of cultural equipment and religious instinct. In a Hindu home the most purified modes of worship retain some external form for the sake of the young who are growing up under the same roof. It is idle to stifle the impulses of the child by breaking its play-things, simply because we are grown up and do not find any need for them.

The emotionally-toned men look upon God as the perfect Beauty or Love, and wish to be lost in the enjoyment of His presence. Krishna is the typical God of beauty and love, and his appeal to

* Pp.98-99.

† *Sivamatmani pasyanti pratimasu na yoginah.*

men and largely women, dominated by emotion and sentiment, is great. A touching folk-song says, "His flute doth call and I must go; and though the way be through the forest thick with thorns, I must go." When the irresistible call comes, none with a heart can fail to respond. For the æsthetic temperament, emotional intensity seems to give ultimate satisfaction. Beauty is its own excuse for being. The devotee clings to the feet of the Lord and refuses to leave them for anything on earth. Tukaram says, "I have grasped thy feet, I will not let them go. . . I will not let thee go, not if thou givest me all else." Chaitanya says, "I crave not for money, nor for men, nor for a beautiful woman, nor for poetic genius. O Lord of the world, I only crave that in every birth of mine, *bhakti* may grow in me towards thee, O Lord." The Hindu thinkers combat the tendency to exalt religious devotion over love of truth and practice of goodness. They know full well that emotions are not isolated functions. By themselves they are morally colourless. The value of an emotion depends on the source from which it springs, whether it is an exalted spiritual devotion or a degrading sensual indulgence. The *bhakti* doctrine does not say that all feeling is sacred. Only the feeling of contemplative humility which accompanies the consciousness of absolute dependence on God is the true religious feeling or *bhakti*. Such a feeling expressive of knowledge

issues in a life devoted to the service of man. Worship, music and art develop the religion of feeling.

The practically-minded man tries to realise his divine destiny by the performance of duty, *karma*, and social service, *yajna*. Freedom is the nature of man; bondage is due to the barriers that shut us from ourselves. Our slavery is complete when we begin to hug it. If we break our selfishness, which walls us off from the world, and identify ourselves with the larger ends, we can gradually develop the love that casteth out fear, disarms all hatred, and breaks all springs of bitterness. Mere mechanical morality is not likely to lead us to the end. It has to be fed by a vital union with God. Then shall we realise that in every man there is a ray of the eternal light emanating from the Central Sun. When we love man, we are conscious of our unity with him in the central spirit and we give effect to this consciousness in our lives. This takes us to the next topic of the ethical character of the Hindu religion.

Ethical Character:—The ethical discipline, which is an application of the doctrine to life, is intended to enable man to realise his potentialities, that he might stand secure in his own soul, free from the hold of the past and fearless of the chances of the future. Ethical endeavour consists in an attempt to live on earth, every moment of our life, in the sweet spirit of adoration, in the glad,

consciousness of an eternal relationship with God. The ideal man lives always in the light of heaven, and his life embodies the great virtues of truth, purity, love and renunciation. Moral progress is judged not by man's power over the forces of nature, but by his control over the passions of the heart. To speak the truth under a shower of bullets, to refrain from reprisals even when you are on the Cross, to respect man and animal, to give all we have, to toil for others, and turn the other cheek, are the principal duties of man. Our modern practical reformers may dismiss them all as too high and unfit for becoming human nature's daily food, admirable ideals fit to console the feeble minds of India or the fishermen of Galilee, but impossible of realisation. Aware of the distance separating actual human nature from this ideal perfection, the Hindu thinkers devised a system of culture and discipline to train the individual for his destiny. The complex of institutions and influences which shape the moral feeling and character of the people is called the *dharma*, which is a fundamental feature of the Hindu religion. Hinduism does not believe in enforcing creeds, but calls upon all Hindus to conform to the discipline. It is a culture more than a creed. If ye do the will or the *dharma*, ye shall know of the doctrine or the truth. The *dharma* helps the smouldering fire which is in every individual to burst into flame.

The *dharma* is a code of conduct supported by the general conscience of the people. It is not subjective in the sense that the conscience of the individual imposes it, nor external in the sense that the law enforces it. It is the system of conduct which the general opinion or the spirit of the people supports, what the Germans call *Sittlichkeit*. Fichte defines the latter as "those principles of conduct which regulate people in their relations to each other, and have become matter of habit and second nature at the stage of culture reached, and of which therefore we are not explicitly conscious." The *dharma* does not force men into virtue, but trains them for it. It is not a fixed code of mechanical rules, but a living spirit which grows and moves in response to the development of the society. Even the State in India was a servant of the *dharma*. It was not above morality. Its function was not to alter or annul *dharma*, but only to administer it. The functions of the State never intruded into the life of the people. The *dharma* or the social life has continued the same in principle for over 4000 years in spite of divergent religious creeds, dynastic wars, and political feuds. The living continuity of Indian life is to be seen not in her political history, but in her cultural and social life. Political obsession has captured India since the battle of Plassey. To-day politics have absorbed life. The State is invading society, and the India of

"no nations," as Rabindranath puts it, is struggling to become a "nation" in the Western sense of the term, with all its defects and merits.

The *dharma* has two sides, which are inter-dependent, the individual and the social. The conscience of the individual requires a guide and he has to be taught the way to realise his purpose and live according to spirit and not sense. The interests of society require equal attention. *Dharma* is that which holds together all living beings in a harmonious order.* Virtue is conduct contributing to social welfare, and vice is its opposite. It is frequently insisted that the highest virtue consists in doing to others as we would be done by. Both the individual and the social virtues are included in what are called *nitya karmas*, or obligatory duties, which are cleanliness or *shaucham*, good manners or *acharam*, social service or *panchamahyajnas*, and prayer and worship or *sandya-vandanam*. The *varnasrama dharma*, which deals with the classes of society and the stages of the individual life, develops the details.

The end of the individual is not so much the securing of happiness here on earth as the realisation of an ideal, the accomplishment of a mission. This has to be achieved through the education of the individual, which involves restraint and suffering. Four stages are distinguished in

* *Dharanad dharma mityahu, dharmena vidhrutah prajah.*

each man's life. In the first stage of *Brahmacharya*, the obligations of temperance, sobriety, chastity, social service are firmly established in the minds of the young. All have to pass through this discipline, irrespective of class or rank, wealth or poverty. In the second stage of a *Grihasta* or householder the individual undertakes the obligations of family life. He becomes a member of a social body and accepts its rights and obligations. Some of the sweetest of the habits of human nature are developed through the ties that bind us to our fellow-men. Self-support, thrift, and hospitality are enjoined in this stage. The householder is respected most since he supports the three other stages. Caste rules are relevant only to this stage. In the third stage of *Vanaprastha* the individual is required to check his attachment to worldly possessions, suppress all the conceits bred in him through the accidents of the second stage, such as pride of birth or property, individual genius or good luck, and cultivate a spirit of renunciation. When he is thoroughly disciplined for the higher life he becomes a *sanyasin*, a disinterested servant of humanity who finds his peace in the strength of spirit. A state of perfect harmony with the Eternal is reached, and the education of the human spirit terminates.

These sanyasis do not cut themselves off from the world and let it go to rack and ruin. The

greatest of their class, Buddha and Sankara, Ramanuja and Ramananda, and scores of others, have entered into the life-blood of the nation and laid the foundations of its religion. Their names are to-day a part of the national heritage.

The caste rules relate to the social functions of individuals. Man's nature can be developed only by a concentration of his personality at a particular point in the social order. Since human beings show one or other of the three aspects of mental life in a greater degree, the *divijas* or the twice-born are distinguished into the three classes of men of thought, men of feeling, and men of action. Those in whom no one quality is particularly developed are the *Sudras*. These correspond to the intellectual, militant, industrial, and unskilled workers, who are all members of one organic whole. So early as the period of the Rigveda was the organic nature of society brought out by the metaphor of head, arms, trunk, and legs, answering to the four classes which are bound by ties of common fellowship. Each class has its appropriate place, rights, and duties in the whole. Since all work is noble, caste pride and exclusiveness are not encouraged. Caste implies responsibilities and not rights. No one is free from any quality, though different qualities predominate in different men. The fulfilment of our functions is not merely a contribution to the whole but also a mode of self-expression. The unique nature of

each individual realises itself in his work, which in a special sense is his own work, *swadharma*.*

The ideal of the Hindu *dharma* is to make all men Brahmins, all people prophets. Then they gain the inward liberty and the joy of spiritual communion, and spontaneously refrain from resisting evil by force, returning violence for violence, and possess the patience and the love to bear it if any beats them, and yield to his wishes if any would deprive them of anything. They are filled with the spirit of peaceful joy or *sante*, which means the extinction of all hate. True Brahminhood represents the highest of which human nature is capable. The social fabric is organised on the basis of spiritual perfection. Man has no wings to soar to the heights: he has therefore to be content with scaling them through effort and pain, step by step. The Hindu social organisation embodies this graduated scheme. I may illustrate this point by two examples of *ahimsa* or non-violence and cow-protection. "Thou shalt not slay," neither men nor animals. It is the highest law, the only law worthy of man. Every Brahmin is asked to respect it, yet the system provides for a class of warriors whose profession it is to kill and get killed. The organisers felt that the spirit of retaliation, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a

* I have not here referred to the bearing of the caste system on village government and trade guilds, or to the present corrupted state of the institution.

tooth," was firmly rooted in human nature. It cannot be suddenly displaced. When submission to evil is wrong, when resisting it by love is impossible, then resistance by violence is allowed, and the warrior classes are told that it is their duty to resist aggression by force. It is, however, a concession to human nature, and the Kshatriya is told that the law of love which the Brahmin practises is higher than the law of brute force which he himself employs. The Kshatriya represents a lower stage of development, since he looks upon man as a lump of flesh, and not a spark of God. He is called upon to fight in a spirit of brotherliness, without hate and out of a sense of duty, and not in a vindictive mood—that he who has made me suffer must suffer too. If the Kshatriya acts in this spirit of humanity, he will rise in spiritual status and rely less on brute force, until at last he becomes a Brahmin incapable of injuring any living thing on earth. Though violent resistance is allowed, the end is to transcend it. We have to sail along the current of nature in order to reach beyond it.

The law against killing applies to the animal world also. Its logical implication is that we should abstain from animal food. The animal creation is also from God, and so has to be treated with kindness. The cow is the symbol of the animal world. The daily prayer of the regenerate Hindus asks for the protection of the

cow and the Brahmin symbols of the animal and the human worlds, nourishers of our bodies and souls respectively. Gandhi writes: "Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India man's best companion. She was the giver of plenty. The cow is a poem of pity . . . the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God."* But there were people in India who showed no pity or mercy for the animal world. They had to be trained out of their habits. The ideal of the Brahmin who abstains from all animal food, who hurts no being either for sport or food, has been ennobling in its influence. The warriors and the traders are chiefly vegetarians. Even the *Sudras* on sacred days abstain from animal food. Thus there is a steady growth towards vegetarianism. Those who have absolutely no scruples about the treatment of animals are the *Panchamas*, on whom the influence of Hinduism has not been perceptible.

The charge that Hinduism has done nothing to unchain the moral and spiritual forces of the lower classes displays a colossal ignorance of the work of Hinduism in India. To-day after so many centuries of Buddhism and Christianity, when a civilised race comes into contact with a backward one, it does not care to understand the

* *Young India*, 6th October, 1921.

mentality of the latter, but practises cruel methods of conquest and subjection, that the backward races, if they are left eyes to weep with, spend laborious days and sleepless nights cursing God because He had allowed these civilisers to get into their lands. The Aryans of India accepted the natives into their fold and helped them to get rid of their habits of dirt and drunkenness, lead clean lives and worship the one living God. When the original inhabitants were found worshipping serpents, the Aryans told them that there was a greater than the serpent-god, the *Nageswara*, the Lord of Serpents, or Krishna who dances on the head of the serpent Kaliya. They did not expose themselves to the avenging power of facts by hurriedly forcing up society to a higher plane of conduct which could not be reached without an inward call. The work of gradual civilising by means of caste continued till the advent of the Muhammedans. In a large country like India, with no easy means of communication, the work achieved is really great. Mr. James Kennedy writes: "The absorption and assimilation of these aboriginal or foreign masses within the Hindu fold was the task of new Hinduism, a task mainly accomplished between the seventh and eleventh centuries A. D.; and it was so thoroughly done that we now find throughout northern India a Hindu population fairly homogeneous in blood, culture, and religion, and sufficiently marked from the degraded tribes that

still haunt the outskirts of civilisation."* Outsiders have been steadily flowing into the Hindu fold, and the religion has been able to absorb and inspire heterogeneous peoples with elements of the higher life. But for this civilising work India would have had instead of fifty million untouchables, five times that number. This work has ceased to be effective since the loss of political freedom by the Hindus. It was then that Hindu society became fixed up in a conservatism and left outside its pale a considerable part of the population of India, which has been the field for exploitation by the non-Hindu religions.

Tradition.—All Hindus are expected to accept the Vedas as their highest religious authority. They embody the principles of life and of the universe. The vital parts of the Vedas are the Upanishads, products of a perfectly spontaneous spiritual movement which implicitly superseded the cruder aspects of the Vedas. The subsequent history of the Hindu faith has been a steady building on the foundations truly laid in the Upanishads. Though religious thought has traversed many revolutions and made great conquests, the central ideas have continued the same for nearly fifty centuries. Whenever dogmatic developments succeeded in imprisoning the living faith in rigid creeds true prophets of the spirit arose and summoned the people to a spiritual revival. When.

* *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. II. chap VIII.

the movement of the Upanishads became lost in dogmatic controversies, and the fever of dialectical disputation lulled the spirit of religion, Buddha insisted on the simplicity of truth and the majesty of the moral law. Probably in the same period, though in another part of the country, when canonical culture and useless learning made religion inhuman scholasticism, and filled those learned in this difficult trifling with ridiculous pride, the author of the Gita opened the gates of heaven to all those who are pure in heart. Sankara's reformation of the Indian religion is not yet a spent force. Ramanuja and Madhwa, Kabir and Nanak, have left permanent marks on the Hindu faith. It is clear that Hinduism is a process, not a result: a growing tradition, not a fixed revelation. It never shut off by force wisdom from anywhere, for there are no distinctions of mine and thine in the Kingdom of Spirit.

THE HINDU DHARMA

FROM the time the history of the Aryans in India commenced up till to-day, it has been the privilege or the misfortune of India to be faced with serious racial and religious crises. In a special sense, India has been a small edition of the world, serving as a laboratory where experiments of racial and religious syntheses relevant to the problems of the world are undertaken and worked out. If it be true that every people has its own distinctive note and brings out one particular aspect of the divine manifestation, India seems to have been selected, in the economy of things, for the purpose of offering solutions for racial and religious conflicts.

In the long history of the Hindu religion with all its cross currents and backwaters, with the windings of the stream and the barren expanses of sand, it is possible to discern a general tendency, a spiritual direction which has continued the same in spite of varying expressions. The central principles of the ancient Hindu *dharma* are not dead shells, but living powers full of strength and suggestiveness. Even if it be not so, it is not altogether without interest to understand the principles of the Hindu faith which has more than two hundred million followers to-day.

The term "*dharma*" is one of complex significance. It stands for all those ideals and purposes,

influences and institutions that shape the character of man both as an individual and as a member of society. It is the law of right living, the observance of which secures the double object of happiness on earth and salvation* It is ethics and religion combined. The life of a Hindu is regulated, to a very detailed extent, by the laws of *dharma*. His fasts and feasts, his social and family ties, his personal habits and tastes are all considered by it.

Moksha or spiritual freedom is the aim of all human life. It is the destiny of man to reach the summits of spirit and attain immortality. We are the children of God, *Amritasya putrah*. The eternal dream of the human heart, the aspiration of the soul to come to its own is the basis of the Hindu *dharma*. It assumes that the fundamental reality is the soul of man. All the desires of heart, all discussions of logic pre-suppose the reality of the *Atman*. It is something unprovable by reason, though no proof is possible without it. Nor is it a mere matter of faith, since it is the faith which underlies all reason. If the self of man is open to doubt, then nothing on earth is free from it. If anything can be, then the soul *is*. It is the ultimate truth which is above all change, the unseen reality which is the basis of all life and logic. It is the mystery which silently affirms itself. What our minds think is not of much importance beside the truth that we are. The fears of man are due to the imperfections which shut him from his destiny, the

* *Abhyudaya* and *Nihoreyasa*.

darkness which hides the light within. If we take refuge in the self, the only fixed point of our being, we shall know that we are not alone in the apparently endless road of life or *samsara* and that we can overcome the world and defy death. "Greater is he that is within you than he that is in the world." *

While the spiritual perfection of man is the aim of all endeavor, the Hindu *dharma* does not insist on any religious belief or form of worship. The utmost latitude is allowed in the matter of addressing and approaching the supreme. The Hindu thinkers were good students of philosophy and sociology and never felt called upon to enforce religious belief. Misunderstandings and antagonisms in religious matters arise, when we put forward excessive claims on behalf of our own views of God. Besides, religion implies freedom and it is the greatest injury that we can inflict on man to compel him to accept what he cannot understand. Again, it is difficult to classify the ways of man to God. The heart of man has written, in its blood its pathway to God. A Sanskrit verse says, "As the birds float in the air and the fish swim in the sea leaving no traces behind, even so are the paths traversed by the spiritual." Christ spoke of the mystery of the divine life revealing itself in the finite soul. "The wind bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof, and canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so

* I, John, V, 21.

is every one that is born of the spirit." God reveals himself now by a flash of lightning, now by a tremor in the soul. To a Hindu who has understood the spirit of his religion all faiths are sacred. In Rabindranath's school at Bolpur, where the one Invisible God is worshipped, abuse of others' faiths is disallowed. Gandhi is most tolerant in his religious views. Regarding the attitude of the Brahmin thinkers to other religions, Wilson writes, "The Brahmins who compiled a code of Hindu law, by command of Warren Hastings, preface their performance by affirming the equal merit of every form of religious worship. Contrarieties of belief, and diversities of religion, they say, are in fact part of the scheme of providence, for as a painter gives beauty to a picture by a variety of colors, or as a gardener embellishes his garden with flowers of every hue, so God appointed to every tribe its own religion that man might glorify him in diverse modes, all having the same end and being equally acceptable in his sight."*

This does not, however, mean that the Hindu thinkers have no right ideas of God and consider all beliefs to be equally true. They have a sure perception of the highest truth, though they do not insist on a universal acceptance of it. They believe that if the mind is enlightened the truth will be spontaneously perceived. Every religion is an expression of the mental and social evolution of

* H. H. Wilson : *Essays and Lectures*, Vol. II, p. 8.

the people who adopt it. It is therefore mischievous to attempt any sudden supplanting of existing beliefs by new ones. The cruder conceptions will give way before the rising rational reflection and the true reformer tries to improve the mental and moral nature of men. Truth is not so much the result of theological faith as the experience of a deeper moral life. So the Hindu thinkers pay more attention to the discipline than to the doctrine. The religion of the Hindus is not a theology as a scheme of life. Whether one is an orthodox Hindu or not depends, not on whether one believes this or that view of God, but on whether one accepts or rejects the *dharma*.*

The highest life enjoined by the *dharma* is what follows naturally from vital faith in the reality of God. If the indwelling of God in man is the highest truth, conduct which translates it into practice is ideal conduct. The several virtues are forms of the truth, *satyakaras*.† Truth, beauty and goodness are a part of the life stuff of the ideal man. He will be an embodiment of the virtues of the self-denial, humility, fraternal love and purity. By the mastery of soul over sense, clouds of hate and mists of passion dissolve and he will be filled with *santi* or serenity and will remain absolutely calm in moments of great peril, personal

* See Manu II, 11.

† See *Mahabharata. Anusasana parva* 162 and *Santi parva* 32.

loss or public calamity. With tranquillity of soul, a steady pulse and a clear eye he will do the right thing at the right moment. He does not belong to this country or that, but is in a true sense the citizen of the world. The quality of *sattva* with its ideals of joy and love predominates over those of *rajas* with its craving for power and pride and *tamas*, with its dulness and inertia. For the perfect men, the *dharma* is an inspiration from within; for others it is an external command, what custom and public opinion demand.

The ideal which requires us to refrain from anger and covetousness, to be pure and loving in thought, word and deed is much too high for those passing through the storm and stress of a life of sin and suffering. It seems to demand of life what it possibly cannot give. It kills all the constituent conditions of life. If renunciation of all were necessary for salvation, many may not care to be saved. The world is so organized that those who practise the Divine rule do not have much chance of success or survival. We are familiar with the way in which the Sermon on the Mount is dismissed as impossible idealism. We cannot be turning cheeks to smiters to receive blows when it is so tempting to give blows on both the cheeks. It may be divine to rejoice in suffering, but the flesh is weak for all that. Christendom consoles itself in the belief that even Jesus nodded once or twice. "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." "My God,

my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Those who pride themselves on their practical spirit reduce the ideals to the level of ordinary human nature, subject to the temptations of power and profit, the flesh and the devil. The modern wordly reformer says, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not kill,' but I say unto you, 'Thou shalt not kill except animals for food, birds for sport and men in battle.' It hath been said, 'Thou shalt not covet.' But I say unto you, 'Thou shalt not covet except on a large scale as in trade and imperialism.' Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not hate,' but I say unto you, 'Thou shalt not hate except the backward races, the enemy nations and the weak of the world.'" Alarmed at the sacrifices exacted by a religious life which tells us that happiness does not depend on power or wealth but on love and peace, our advanced reformers make so many reservations to the divine law that they completely destroy the force of the latter and justify our modern practice that violence, abundance of possessions and armaments are the final end of man's life. They conveniently forget the story of that friend of ours who planned to build great storehouses to provide an abundance for many years but was cheated of his chance by the blow of death, which came overnight.

The Hindu thinkers are conscious of the great gulf that separates the actual nature of man which is bad from the ideal which seems to be well-nigh impossible. The consciousness of the great distance

between the actual and the ideal does not tempt them to distort the ideal itself. It would be a blasphemy against the spirit in us that shall not be forgiven. They therefore attempt to develop the infinitely precious ideal from out of the apparently refractory stuff of life. The nature of man and his habits of judgment change rather slowly. We must have patience in the striving after perfection. The law of Karma tells us that millions of lives are consumed before one perfect life is produced. For thought to reach the highest plane we must plan, toil and agonize a lot. For our heart to pulse with joy, countless hearts must be burned out by suffering. Many strivings and sacrifices are needed to generate a holy character. Most men climb up the ladder to the spiritual heights only rung by rung. Few can fly from the bottom to the top at one bound. The *varnasrama dharma* or the discipline of the classes and stages of life is the Hindu's device for the gradual improvement of human nature. It is intended to make all the Lord's people prophets. Its principles are those of a kingdom of spirit, not a civil commonwealth, of a universal institution, not a national organization. If morality is that which conscience imposes, and law that which state commands, the *dharma* is neither the one nor the other. It is the tradition sustained by the conviction of countless generations of men, which help to build the soul of truth in us. It corresponds to the *Sittlichkeit* of the Germans and is independent of both the individual conscience and the laws of the state. That is why dynastic feuds and

imperialist aggressions have not touched the life of India which has continued the same for nearly fifty centuries. Successive storms of conquest have passed over the changeless millions as wind over reeds.

Moksha or liberation is the ideal towards which humanity has to move. All life is set to the music of this ideal. All men are equal in that they are born of God. They are equal since they are to rise to the same divine destiny. But men differ with regard to their actual equipment for the ideal. They have varying amounts of darkness and evil to eliminate and have to put forth varying efforts to illumine their life with light and love. The education of the individual spirit is arranged through the scheme of *asramas* or stage of life *varnas* or classes of men. It takes into account the different sides of human nature. The life of man is rooted in desires or *kama*. Man is a bundle of desires. Manu says, 'It is not good that the soul should be enslaved by desire, yet nowhere is to be found desirelessness (*akamata*).'* Since our activities are impelled by our desires, the right regulation of our desires is also a part of *dharma*. So *kama* or enjoyment is recognized as a valid pursuit. It is not mere satisfaction of animal impulses but is the expression of the freedom of the self. This is not possible, until we escape from the tyranny of the senses. The life of man is not a mere succession of sensations but is the manifestation of an eternal idea

developing itself through temporary forms. The desires of men are directed into the channels of family life and public duty. The emotional or artistic life of man is also a part of life's integral good. But art cannot flourish in an atmosphere of asceticism. We must have wealth or *artha*. The economic needs of the community should be satisfied, if the creative impulses of men are to be liberated for the higher cultural life. Rules are laid down regarding the interests of the community in the matter of the wealth earned by individual members. The liberty of each is restricted by the needs of all. Self-denial is the only way to gain wealth and enjoyment. *Dharma* or duty controls the pursuit of both pleasure and profit, *kama* and *artha*. Those in whom *dharma* predominates are of *sattvik* nature, while the seekers of wealth are mere *rajasik* and those of pleasure *tamasik*.* The individual who observes the laws of *dharma* automatically attains *moksha*, and so is it said that *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*, form the ends of life.

Whoever may have made the world or not, whatever be the truth about the origin of life and the universe, the supremacy of the moral end is admitted by all. In Hindu thought, man is said to come into being for a divine purpose. The unextinguished passions of our vanished lives bring about our birth on earth. It is through suffering that our weakness can be converted into strength, our ignorance into illumination. The evil of existence is expiated only

* Manu. XII, 38.

by the suffering and self-restraint of life. The word "*asrama*" comes from a root which means "to suffer." Without suffering, there is no progress; without death, no resurrection. Our life from beginning to end is a kind of death which means a larger life. The more we die to ourselves, the more do we live to God. Living and dying are inextricably blended and the perfect life is the crown of a complete death. Four stages are distinguished in the life of every Hindu, of which the first two are those of *Brahmachari* or student, *Grhastha* or householder. The last two stages deal with the retirement from life when the individual becomes a servant of God and of humanity.*

The first period opens with the sacramental symbol of initiation into a spiritual birth. It is intended to build up the psychophysical constitution of man. The building of the body and the training of the mind are the principal aims of this stage. The student is taught the habits of cleanliness, chastity, good manners and godliness.† Social sympathies are cultivated by the insistence on poverty for all students whether they are sons of princes or of peasants. Every student is required to beg for his food and this training in poverty impresses on the mind of the student that wealth is not an essential condition of a good life. The students are not allowed to become laws unto themselves; nor are they

* Manu VI, 87.

† Manu II, 69.

delivered into the hands of an ignorant and blind fanaticism. They are not allowed to build altars and idols in their own imagination or fall a prey to superstitions and creeds. Loyalty to truth and respect for tradition are insisted on. The kind of education depends on the needs and capacities of the boys. The task was not so complex as it is to-day since the future vocations of boys were roughly settled. In the programme of education, secular as well as religious, no distinction is made between boys and girls. Only co-education was not encouraged.

When the stage of apprenticeship is over, the student becomes responsible for a family: "The man is not man alone, but his wife and children also." * He becomes the bread-winner of the family and thus the mainstay of the community. Family life and social duty help towards the ultimate goal and presuppose self-restraint. Every man is expected to do his work for the world. He should not, out of mere selfish pleasure, abstain from social service. † We are pledged to one another and should live for one another, the individual for the family, the family for the community, the community for the nation and the nation for the world. The caste system, valid in the second stage of the householder, assumes the unity and the interdependence of humanity. It takes into account the needs of the society as well as the interests of the individual. It sustains personality in that it helps the

* *Manu IX, 45.*

† *The Bhagavadgita III, 18.*

individual to transcend himself by giving his devotion to something beyond himself. By focusing his energies at a particular point in the environment, he tries to actualize his potentialities. It is an illustration of Hegel's harmony of opposites, a point of view which reconciles the apparently conflicting claims of the individual and the society. Not the good of self as a thing apart, or the good of society by itself, but a higher good to promote which constant self-renewal and social service are means is the governing principle of the caste system. Taking into account the variety of human nature, it lays down ways and means by which each man can attain full self-expression. It works up to the ideal of equality by recognizing the actual differences. It is an attempt to co-operate with the forces of nature and not flout them. Those who criticize the institution from the platform of modern knowledge do not remember that in no other country were peoples belonging to stocks of very unequal value thrown together. The pre-vedic peoples with whom the Aryans had to mingle were of a lower grade of civilization and culture. They were constituted into the fourth estate of the unregenerate, the once-born, the *ekajati*, in whom no quality of intellect, emotion, or will is particularly developed. The twice-born or the regenerated are divided into three classes according as their intellect, emotion or will is more dominant than the others. Those who are strongly endowed with the powers of thought and reflection are the *Brahmins*; those gifted with heroism and love are the

Kshatriyas or the warriors ; those strongly inclined towards the practical business of life are the *Vaisyas* or the traders. The four classes correspond to the intellectual, the militant, the industrial and the unskilled workers. All of them serve God's creation, by their own capacities, the *Brahmins* by their spirituality, the *Kshatriyas* by their heroism, the *Vaisyas* by their skill and the *Sudras* by their service.* All of them place the common good above that of their party or class. Claims of egoism and ambition are subordinated to those of conscience and justice, the enduring values that are confided to our keeping. When the different classes fulfil their respective functions, the society is considered to be just or in accordance with *dharma*.

The true interests of the unskilled workers were not neglected. The *Vaisyas* pursue trade and love, wealth and comfort though they are required to interpret them in terms of life and welfare. This caste is an association of men united by an economic nexus. Commerce, however, was checked since the members of this class were called upon to hold the goods of life in the bonds of love. The *Kshatriyas* were the defenders of society from external aggression and internal disorder. The military organisation of the state was entrusted to them. They were in charge of the political arrangements. It was not the intention of the Hindu *dharma* to make the body of the people act as a general militia. Efficiency is everywhere gained through specialisation. Those whose business

* *Sukraniti* I, 38-42.

it is to make war and resist wrong by force must possess the proper aptitude for it and get the necessary training. The art of government cannot be practised by all. It is increasingly felt that amateur politicians keen on satisfying their constituencies and with no other training than what could be got from the hurly-burly of popular elections are incapable of doing justice to the task of administration. One particular class was devoted to the military and the administrative purposes, and the people as a whole were not possessed by a passion for government, for domination and power. To-day, the great wars are fought for the government of the world and for the possession of its markets and not for the moral elevation of the people or the pursuit of good. The political obsession is the cause for the drifting of the world in deep confusion to unseen issues. It may be said that when there is a professional ruling class, there is no guarantee that the rule will be unselfish. The training to which they are subjected is a sufficient security for the right discharge of their functions. Besides, the rulers are not allowed to annul or alter *dharma*, but are only to administer it. The changes in the *dharma* are introduced by the Brahmin thinkers, who possess no vested interests, but lead a life of spirit in compulsory poverty. They interpret the *dharma* in cases of doubt and difficulty.

The organisation of the society is essentially aristocratic in the best sense of the term, as only the philosophically minded men with detached view

lay down the laws. The priests were the lawgivers even among the Jews, the Iranians and the Celts. The qualifications of the true Brahmins, wisdom, self-control and disinterestedness, made selfish legislation difficult. The Brahmins engaged in the pursuit of knowledge and the beautifying of life were regarded as superior to the officers and administrators, and were not obliged to do what is congenial to the latter. They were freed from all material cares and subordination in spiritual matters to earthly authorities.* The institution recognises that all good reforms start in the mind of one man and at first repel the world at large. Society cannot progress if all forward steps should first obtain the sanction of the majority. Absolute freedom for the creative thinkers is the first condition of culture and progress. Mr. Bertrand Russell, in a brilliant article in the *Century*, observes "without freedom, the man who is ahead of his age is rendered impotent." The considered conviction of one wise man is more worthy than the opinions of a myriad fools, according to Manu.†

The moral codes are adapted to the different stages of the unfolding of the life of spirit. The trader hoards up life zealously for material ends; the warrior flings it away for order and organisation and resists evil by the employment of force. The Brahmin lives the life of *ahimsa* or non-violence with zeal and determination. His non-violence is not a sign of weakness or cowardice, but the natural expression of spiritual

* Manu IV, 11.

† XII, 113.

strength and divine love. He has passed through the stage of a warrior and has found it unworthy of a true believer in God. Centuries of hereditary training and the influence of environment have made the Hindu a mild passive meditative being, a worshipper of the ideal of the Brahmin *sannyasi*. Even to-day he is willing to pay his profound admiration to an emaciated saint like Gandhi.

The existence of orders lower than the Brahmin, the dedication of one class to the business of war, have misled many students of Hinduism into thinking that the Hindu *dharma* is not based on the principle of non-violence. The simple explanation that we have to pass through the lower stages in order to transcend them is forgotten. The higher we rise, the more austere should our life be. The legend of St. Christopher, who undertook to carry the Christ-child on his shoulders across a stream, is applicable to us all. The deeper he entered into the water, the heavier became the burden. By a slow conquest of the passions, by a rising knowledge of the spiritual basis of the world, all men who are born *sudras* gradually rise in the scale till they become Brahmins. The load becomes heavier the higher we rise, and our strength will have to increase in proportion to the rise in the weight of the load. While the *Kshatriya* in view of his limitations may employ force, though without hatred and with a clean conscience, the Brahmin should refrain altogether from the use of force and the cherishing of hatred or ill feeling for any.

The relativity of the stages leading up to the absolute ideal may also be illustrated from another case. Modern evolution is confirming the Hindu theory of the continuity of the animal and the human worlds. The Hindu *dharma* inculcates respect for life and tenderness towards all forms of animal creation. "Thou shalt not kill" applies to the animals as well. It is also believed that animal diet clogs the finer sensibilities of human life. More than what it adds to the physical it takes away from the psychical. Jesus himself is quite clear that even animals are objects of sacredness, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of God. Yet the peoples of India were accustomed to animal diet, and so regulations were laid down restricting the use of animal diet for the fourth class and prohibiting it as a rule for the other classes, with the result that the Hindus as a whole are tending to give it up more.

Caste has economic implications. Many of the modern castes are only occupational divisions. Every man is not fit for all things and does not feel that he can begin any trade as he pleases. Nor do individuals go about in search of work, but they serve society by filling the station in which they happen to be placed. Unlimited competition and selfish individualism are checked. A religious character is impressed on every kind of work and form of industry. The bricklayer and the carpenter, the blacksmith and the milkman believe that they glorify God by right performance of their work. In these days of large-scale production,

and factory labor, we tend to forget that when a man is cut off from his family and made to work in a large factory, the work becomes joyless and mechanical. The caste on the other hand puts all men working the same profession in their natural surroundings, instead of tearing them away from their homes and working them for long hours and small wages. The fulness of communal life with its living associations of beauty, love and social obligations helps to make the worker happy. The members of his family who share in his work introduce sweetness and humanity into it. If women and children are to be worked, it is better that they work in the atmosphere of a home where it is possible to embody their creative impulses in what they turn out. There is a finer stimulus to right action than mere success in competition or satisfaction of customers can supply. Those who practice the same craft develop corporate feeling and professional honour. The young acquire from the plastic influences of the environment the right kind of vocational training. They absorb unconsciously the tradition of the trade and the economic pursuit happens to be the free self-expression of their soul. It is true that modern conditions are working against cottage industries and small-scale production. But it is not everywhere the case. Fine arts, decorative industries, even spinning and weaving as supplementary interests of the agriculturists may be confined to homes and we can have small factories worked by electricity or oil engines. Caste as trade guilds is not yet out of date.

While the suggestion of a definite programme of life at the very beginning is not undesirable, still its stereotyping without the least regard to the natural endowment and special aptitudes is likely to result in an enslavement of life which finds it difficult to adjust itself to the complex condition of the modern world.

Strictly speaking, the caste of a man is determined by the predominance of reason, emotion or will in him which correspond roughly to the three *gunas* or qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.^{*} Manu mentions three principles as governing the caste of a man which are *tapas* or individual effort, *srutam* or the cultural environment and *yoni* or heredity. The first is a vague test and is not available for objective use. The second depends on the home influences, which in their turn depend on the third consideration of birth. The only practicable test is birth, and this view is in consonance with the principles of rebirth and *Karma* accepted by the Hindus. "The soul that rises with our life's star hath had elsewhere its setting and cometh from afar." Peoples with different racial heritages can live together in amity and fellowship only on the basis of caste. The formulators of the institution felt that though birth was the only available test, spiritual character was the real basis of the divisions of the society. Manu allows that if an individual practices the ways of

^{*} See *Bhavisya Purana* III, IV, 23.

the good and leads a pure life, he overcomes the effects of heredity.* According to the *Mahabharata*, the test of regeneracy is "not birth, not learning, but only conduct."† We have ignored all factors other than birth, with the result that the system has rigidly confined people for all time to particular compartments, enslaved successive generations of men and proved well nigh fatal to the free growth of social polity. The natural plasticity and fluidity of life are not taken into account by the unflexible moulds and barriers of the system. We have reached a condition of society where the disorganisation of social life is so great that the principle of birth should be subordinated. Referring to a similar state of affairs, the *Mahabharata* says, "There has been so much mixture in marriages that the test of *jati* or birth is no good. The governing consideration should be *sila* or conduct, and the first Manu has declared that there is no point in distinctions of caste, if character is not considered."‡

Since the distinction of functions among the different classes is likely to generate pride and exclusiveness, in spite of the training during the student period, the general laws of the equal treatment of all are insisted on. Highest virtue consists in doing to others as we would be done

* See also *Mahabharata. Vanaparva*, Ch. 216.

† *Vrittam eva*, M. B. *Vanaparva* Ch. 314.

‡ *Vanaparva*, Ch. 182. See Manu IV, 224 and 225.

by. *Vishnu Purana* says, "Everywhere ye should perceive the equal; for the realisation of equality or *samatava* is the worship of God."* There are duties which men of all caste are required to obey, such as non-injury to life, truth, integrity, cleanliness and self-control.† After all, the caste divisions are incidental to our imperfections and should not therefore constitute a source of pride. The one Eternal has no caste. The rules of caste are applicable only in the stage of the householder. Even here, they are not superior to the claims of humanity. What is necessary at the present day is an acceptance of the aims of caste and the cultivation of a more truly social spirit. The blighting bigotries and the rigid restrictions about the amenities of life are inconsistent with humanity and fellowship and therefore are to be given up. Manu does not encourage them. "The ploughman, the friend of family, the cowherd, the servant, the barber and the poor stranger offering his service—from the hands of such *sudras* may food be taken."‡

The caste rules were not rigid until the advent of the Mohammedans to India. The social laws were fluid and elastic and the mutability of growth was not sacrificed to the strait waistcoat of a legal formula. We read in the *Puranas* stories of individuals and of families who changed from lower to

* XVII.

† Manu X 63; VI, 91-92.

‡ Manu IV, 253.

higher castes. Manu admits the possibility of ascent and decent.* Rules for change of caste by gradual purification are also mentioned.† The higher strata were accessible to merit from below. When Hindu India lost political freedom and the new rulers adopted a policy of proselytism, social initiative disappeared and law and custom became fetishes, with disastrous results for national solidarity. We have to recover the original spirit of the *dharmā*, which was not limited to particular forms, but manifested itself in fresh ones, changing the old and developing the new. The exaggerated value given to caste in times of political insecurity is no more necessary. Caste has a future only if it is confined to social matters. In every society, people enter into marriage relations only with those who are near to them in habits of mind and action. Since a common cultural tradition is better developed among those who pursue the same vocation, marriages among members of the same profession become the order of the day. Even in ancient India, intermarriages among members of different castes were not forbidden, though they were not encouraged. *Anuloma* and *pratiloma* marriages are not usual, though they are not invalid according to Hindu law.‡ If such marriages are not common, it is because they tend to disturb the intimate industrial, social and spiritual life of the com-

* See X, 42; IX, 335.

† Manu X, 57-65.

‡ See *Bombay Law Reporter*. *Bai Gulab vs. Jivanlal Harilal* Vol. XXIV.

munity. Caste as a basis of intimate social relations does not interfere with the larger life of the nation. As the emperor Asoka said to his Hindu minister, "Caste may be considered when it is a question of marriage or invitation, but not of the *dharma*, for the *dharma* is concerned with virtues and virtues have nothing to do with caste." *

It is a bold affirmation of an untruth to argue that social service is unknown to the Hindus. Much capital is made out of the treatment of the untouchables. It is not remembered that a free India rendered them much greater service than what other free countries even in recent times have done for their backward classes. How have the superior nations civilized the Tasmanian and the Australian aborigines, certain Maori peoples and North American Indian tribes? We generally refine them into extinction and where that is not possible, we sink them into the slough of vice and crime worse than any normal expressions of savage life. If the Kaffir has multiplied under the British protection and the Javanese under the Dutch, if the populations of Straits Settlements and British India have not vanished before their civilizers, it is because a good God has put in a climate unfavourable to the civilizers. The tropics can never become their habitat. They can be held but not peopled by the Europeans. But for the limits set by nature, the history of the tropical regions would have been different. From the time the Aryans met the peoples of a

* *Indian Social Reformer*, June 4, 1922.

lower grade of civilization, they devised ways and means by which the different portions of the population could develop in social, spiritual directions. The Aryans even accepted a non-Aryan representative of the "black" peoples and made him deliver the message of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. *Krishna's* conduct scandalised society and provoked the Vedic gods of *Indra* and *Brahma*. To-day the Aryan worshippers of these gods look upon Krishna as an avatar of God. Krishna, however, had great respect for the Aryan thinkers, and it is said that he washed the feet of the Brahmin guests at the *Rajasuyayaga* of king *Yudhishthira*. The Aryans took to the non-Aryan gods very kindly, improved them where possible, subordinated them where necessary. The worshippers of *Mahisha* (buffalo-demon) were told that the Cosmic Spirit was greater than the *Mahisha*. The worshippers of serpents were instructed that there was a greater than the serpents, the Lord of serpents, *Nageswara* or *Krishna*, who danced over the head of *Kaliya*. The marks of the gradual civilizing of the lower classes are visible throughout the cultural history of India. Whenever there was a tendency to overlook the common humanity of men, a *Buddha* or a *Sankara* arose, emphasising the common doom of all high and low. The extent of the country 2,000 miles long and 1,500 miles broad is not similar to that from Dan to Beersheeba. The means of communication that we have at the present day were not available till recently. If the work of civilizing the backward classes had not been

undertaken and carried on with zeal and success by the ancient Indians, we would have had not merely fifty millions of these "depressed" classes, but a much larger number. When the outside invaders came into the country, the Hindu felt nervous and as a sheer act of self-preservation stereotyped the existing divisions, and some were left outside the pale of the caste order. Though Manu says that "there is no fifth class anywhere,"* the tribes who were not influenced by the *dharma* formed themselves into the fifth class. "He who has abandoned his duties is cruel and pitiless, and oppresses others who is passionate and full of destructiveness is a *mleccha*"† No words are too strong for the deplorable condition of these people. To disregard the claims of man simply because he happens to be low or belongs to another race is against the religious spirit of Hinduism. Now that things are in a more settled condition, the Hindu leaders are reiterating the central truth that the least of all men has a soul and need not be considered past all power to save.

The last two stages of *Vanaprastha* and *Sannyasa*, which may be taken as one for our purposes, treat of those who have retired from the competitive struggle for life. The *Sannyasi* represents the highest type of Indian manhood. From selfishness, the individual has progressed to self-annihilation through the extinction of all prejudice, hatred and ambition. He has passed

* X, 4.

† *Sukraniti* I. 44.

through all institutions and is now above them. His emotional life expresses itself in the love of the divine or *bhakti* and not in animal lusts or personal likes. He perceives the oneness and wholeness of humanity, and his mind is freed from all superstition and unreason. His active energies are devoted to the service of humanity, knowing as he does that God is in all beings and is all of them.* He who has the vision of all in one, in whom the impersonal predominates over the personal, cannot sin.† He is the superman of the *Bhagavadgita*, the awakened of Buddhism, the true Brahmin who glories in his poverty, rejoices in suffering, and is finely balanced in mind, with peace and joy at heart. He loves all men, birds and beasts, and resists not evil but overcomes it by love. In him the soul of man is at its highest stretch. The ideal of the *Sannyasi* has dominated the life of India from the time of the *Rishis* of the *Upanishads*. To follow this ideal, kings lay down their crowns and sceptres and assume the garb of poverty, fighting heroes forget the pride of victory and break their weapons, and skilled traders and workmen pursue their toil with steadfast mind surrendering to God the fruits thereof.

These *sannyasis* as a rule are the helpers of humanity. The greatest of them, like Sankara and Ramanuja, Ramananda and Kabir, have entered into the lifeblood of the nation and laid the foundations of its religion. It is, however, true, that in India, as in

* *Sarva bhutamayam harim. Vishnu Purana* I, 19, 9.

† *Manu* XII, 118.

Mediaeval Europe, many ascetics made the mistake of escaping into the wilderness from the worries of the world. These hermits of the cloister and monks of the desert are voices astray in the dark. Their perpetual consciousness of incitement to sin, their pre-occupation with their selfish salvation show that they have lost their lives in their anxiety to save them. As the tide of monasticism which swept over Europe in the Middle Ages is not true to the teaching of Jesus, who asks us to look upon ourselves as servants trusted by the master, porters bidden to watch, stewards to whom much is committed, sons to whom the father confides his affairs, so the deserters from the battle of life are not the true *sannyasis* who rage to suffer for mankind, with intense humility, glowing faith, sincere love and sober joy.

To reach the highest state, it is not always necessary to adhere literally to the rules of *dharma*. There are cases of sudden conversion, uprushes of the spirit from seemingly commonplace souls, astonishing moral elevations among men who have not learned the highest lesson of existence. The rules of *dharma*, however, represent the normal growth of spirit. The freed souls sometimes smile at the irrelevance of the painful scrupulosities and anxious questionings about ceremonial propriety which worry those in the lower stages of life. The order of *sannyasis* is open to men of all castes. No man, however, should desire liberation without paying his three debts,* to the gods by means of hymns and prayers,

* See Manu VI, 35.

to the *pitris* or the fathers by gifts and charity, help and service to men and rearing up of progeny, and to the *Rishis* by passing on to others the instruction received by himself.

The Hindu *Dharma* has room for all kinds of men, the dispassionate old who have retired from the business of life and the eager pushful young keen on worldly success. The four castes and orders are not intended to be special moulds into which the Indian people are thrown, but forms capable of embracing the whole of humanity. Without the employment of force or eagerness for exploitation, Hinduism has been able to civilize a large part of Asia. What has attracted it is not imperialist expansion, but the cultural conquest, the peaceful penetration of the thought and mind of the peoples to which it comes by its own spirituality. From the kingdom of Khotan in Central Asia to the island of Java, which lies on the way between India and Australia the creative urge of the Hindu genius found its expression in life and art. Java had Hindu settlers in as far back as the second century A. D. and she has remained since then predominantly Hindu and Buddhist. To-day, Japan, China and Burma look to India as their spiritual home even as Christians look to Palestine. Wherever we go from Russia to China, at Samarkand, at Tibet, we can trace the influence of the Indian civilization. All these pale into insignificance when we remember that there are records of Indian culture in Western Asia, in the plains of Mesopotamia, in the regions watered by the

rivers Tigris and Euphrates. Inscribed tablets discovered at Boghaz-koi, assigned by competent scholars to 1400 B. C., speak to us of people who were worshipping the Hindu gods. This influence of India is not because her religion is old or her empires are great, not because she developed weapons of destruction or exercised force on a large scale, but because she had an intelligent understanding of the deeper unity in the midst of all diversity. Wherever she went, the deep and silent influence of her vision of the unity of all things in God pervaded. All the mighty impulses that entered into India were synthesized on the same plan. All religions she welcomed since she realized from the cloudy heights of contemplation that the spiritual landscape at the hilltop is the same though the pathways from the valley are different. To those who were wandering at random in the plains without suspecting that all roads lead to the same top, she says Raise your eyes. Things in the valley separate us. Up yonder, high above us, we are all one. The variety of ways has meaning at the foot of the hill, but if we understand what they signify on the snowy summits, we shall know that all are reaching out for God. It may be that India with her assimilative genius may yet succeed in harmonising the mighty currents of the world's great religions that have met on her soil.

ISLAM & INDIAN THOUGHT*

I

WE find at the present day an eager quest in many directions after a higher wisdom, a more adequate philosophy of life than satisfied our fathers. Traditional bonds of religious opinion are loosened as hardly ever before and men claim absolute freedom to think as they like and mould their theories of life anew under the impulses of the hour. Novelties of thought seem to have a greater fascination for our modernist minds than the results of ancient wisdom and the modesties of ancient reverence. The present unsettlement is a challenge to the ancient creeds to revindicate their validity and usefulness. The spiritual leaders of all progressive religions are now busy, rethinking their traditional views so as to rescue them from the assaults of advancing knowledge and experience. In the book under review Sir Ahmed Hussain, a distinguished Indian Moslem of broad culture and religious seriousness, attempts to indicate the lines along which the religion of Islam should be interpreted if it is not to conflict with modern ideals of science and philosophy. We get from it an

* *Notes on Islam* by Sir Ahmed Hussain, K. C. I. E., C. S. I., edited by Khan Bahadur Hajee Khaja Muhammad Hussain. Government Central Press, Hyderabad, Deccan.

idea of the kind of contribution which India is likely to make to the future reconstruction of Islam.

The development which a religion assumes in any country depends upon its cultural tradition and national character. In Arabia, Islam was a simple lofty theism, quite a stranger to the refinements of the later centuries. When it subdued the Persian people the semitic tendencies yielded to the mystic ones. The incomparable beauty of the primitive Arab tradition gave place to rich philosophy and gorgeous mythology in which Mohammad became a mysterious being suspended between heaven and earth. About 70 millions of the population of India are followers of Islam and the vast majority of them are ethnologically of the same type as the Hindus. It is but natural that the Indian form of Islam should have its own features. Till the other day, the Indian Moslem felt it to be his proud privilege to bring to bear on the interpretation of Islam his own spiritual heritage. Latterly however, a curious notion has got hold of some of our, strange to say, educated Mohammadan brethren, that by transferring their allegiance to the faith of Islam, they became the descendants of the Moors of Spain and the Caliphs of Baghdad. They regarded themselves as culturally and socially distinct from their Hindu fellow countrymen. We do not change our whole mental makeup, simply because we change our intellectual beliefs or religious convictions. To change one's creed is not to cut oneself off from the past of one's country or its ideals. It is a welcome sign of

the times that the Indian leaders of Moslem thought and practice are realising the common spiritual heritage of India and protesting against the artificial cleavages which false prophets and designing politicians have encouraged. Whatever our faiths be, the same blood runs in our veins and we are all heirs of a great spiritual inheritance. What A. E. says of Ireland is truer of India. "We are among the few races still remaining on earth whose traditions run back to the gods and the divine origin of things."* The fact of India reaches back into the mists of antiquity and so many traditions, appeal to us, even against our will sometimes, touch hidden chords, stir the memory and open the forgetful eyes. The spirit of India is the *elan vital*, the brooding over-soul which makes us all Indians. With a spacious spiritual background, it is the privilege of the Indian Moslem to interpret the faith of Islam, in its truest, highest and noblest sense so as to distinguish it from the creed professed to-day by the ignorant bigot, the political intriguer and the religious fanatic. If the Indian Moslem combines his inherited tradition with his acquired faith and effects a synthesis of the old and the new, he will be led to emphasize those neglected aspects of the truth of Islam which really promoted culture and civilisation and brought to life a dying world and discard those unimportant details which happened to be exaggerated out of all proportion on account of historical accidents. He will break the yoke of the crystallised religion which pervades and

* The Interpreters.

blindly influences the life of the people and give the world of Islam an interpretation of the message of Mohammad, which, I venture to say, will be more in accord with the spirit of the prophet than with the dogmatic developments of his later followers. The Hon'ble Mr. Amir Ali in his great book on "*The Spirit of Islam*" (on which I have drawn freely in this paper) and Sir Ahmed Hussain in his "*Notes on Islam*" give us a foretaste of the wonderful flowers which will grow out of the seedbed of India's past.

II

What appeals to the Indian imagination in the life of Mahommed is his deeply religious nature. Trying to peer into the mysteries of creation, Mahommed used to betake himself for prayer and meditation to a cave on Mount Hira and there he used to remain whole nights plunged in deep thought and meditation. With him, religion was an effort to know the truth and live it. By interpreting religion as life, we adopt a sane attitude to creeds and traditions. Creeds are true only to the extent that they correspond to the knowledge of the facts of life. Experience is not merely the fulfilment but also the test of creeds and every age is called upon to reinterpret the creeds in the light of growing experience. The restatement of the principles of Islam given by Sir Ahmed Hussain is naturally neither quite orthodox, nor quite heterodox, but something midway between the two (p 7). Our author is not prepared to swear by the literal interpretations

of the words of the Qu'ran as given by the church doctors but feels free to interpret them as seems most reasonable to him. In doing so he is true to the spirit of Mohammad who lays down no restrictions likely to keep enchained the conscience of advancing humanity. Revelation of God is only through the human soul and we are not compelled to believe that the wisest of those to whom they were made were free from the errors and prejudices of the age in which they lived. In the Qu'ran there are ever so many things, of strictly local and temporary interest, which are not at all relevant to religion *qua* religion. The conservatives of all creeds forget that "the dry bones of a religion are nothing, the spirit that quickens the bones is all" (p. 12). Sir Ahmed Hussain distinguishes Islam from the dogmatic Mohammadanism of some of our moulvies. "I make a difference between Islam and Mohammadanism. The latter is not pure Islam. It has forgotten the spirit of Islam and remembers only the letter of its law" (p. 12 note a).

When we take our stand on the 'experience' side of religion, we realise that the truly religious men of all faiths are nearer each other than they imagine. In the broad spirit of Hinduism, our author recognises that the truth intended by all religions is the same and quotes with approval Zalal-ud-din Rumi's saying, "All religions are in substance one and the same.*" It is impossible for the Indian Moslem to accept wholeheartedly the spirit of exclu-

* Masnair III 12.

siveness which is a marked feature of semitic religions. India has stood for religious freedom and harmony from the beginning of her history. In accord with this spirit, the great Akbar tried to fuse all Indians into a homogeneous nation by the unifying bond of a common religion in the practice of which both Mohammadans and Hindus would join hands, though he failed in his attempt as the conditions were not in his favour. Considerably influenced by the idealism of the Upanishads, which steer clear of all images and dogmas and thus have universal value, Dara Shukoh, the great grandson of Akbar, wrote a work on *Majmaya Bahrain* or the union of the two oceans (of Hinduism and Islam). He recognised that the two religions were equally efficient in helping us to live higher life. Sir Ahmed Hussain holds that through different angles of approach, we may reach the same goal of salvation. "Please remember that there are many men and many minds and there are likely to be as many religions, as many conceptions of God, as many notions of His attributes and as many ideas of the beginning or end of things as there are thinking minds" (p. 24). For those who are familiar with the practice of the mass of Mohammadans, it may perhaps be difficult to believe that this catholic view represents the teaching of the Qu'ran. It is, however, nothing more than the truth. The erroneous belief that there is no true religion besides Islam breeds bigotry, intolerance and fanaticism and is contrary to the teachings of the Qu'ran. "The first verse of the second sura com.

mands us to believe in not only what was revealed to Mahommed but also in what was revealed to those who went before him. It clearly indicates that there are and will ever be, many true religions of which Islam is one" (pp. 30-31).*

The religious genius of Mohammad is evident from the fact that he imposed no credal tests. "Whoever says 'there is no God but God' will attain salvation" is almost the first saying of Mohammad

*The following passage from Jalal-ud-din Rumi's *Masnavi* brings out how we should sympathise with cruder forms of worship, giving credit to their sincerity

Moses, to his horror, heard one summer day
A benighted shepherd blasphemously pray.
'Lord', he said, 'I would I knew Thee, where Thou art,
That for Thee I might perform a servant's part
Comb Thy hair, and dust Thy shoes and sweep Thy room
Bring Thee every morning milk and honeycomb.'
Moses cried, 'Blasphemer! curb thy blatant speech'
Whom art thou addressing? Lord of all and each,
Allah the Almighty? Thinkest thou He doth need
Thine officious folly? Wilt all bounds exceed?
Miscreant, have a care, lest thunderbolts should break
On our heads and others perish for thy sake
Without eyes He seeth, without ears He hears,
Hath no son nor partner through the endless years,
Space cannot contain Him, time He is above
All the limits that He knows are Light and Love!
Put to shame, the Shepherd, his poor garment rent,
Went away disheartened, all his ardour spent
Then spake God to Moses: "Why hast thou from me
Driven away my servant, who goes heavily?
Not for severance it was, but union
I commissioned thee to preach, O hasty one!
Hatefullest of all things is to me divorce,
And the worst of all ways is the way of force.
I made not creation, self to aggrandize
But that creatures might with me communion prize
What though the childish tongues trip? 'Tis the heart I see,
If it really loves me in sincerity.

Quoted in Blande Field's *Mystics and Saints of Islam*
(p. 154.)

reported in the collections of his traditions. Moham-mad protests against the exclusiveness of the Jewish and the Christian creeds and declares that all those who believe in God and do His will are eligible for salvation. "They say, verily, none shall enter Paradise except those who are Jews or Christians...say, Produce your proof, if Ye speak the truth Nay, but he who directeth towards God and doth that which is right he shall have his reward with his Lord" (Sura. V. 105-6). "Verily, those who believe (the Moslems) and those who are Jews, Christians or Sabæans, whoever hath faith in God and the last day, and worketh that which is right and good—for them shall be the reward with their Lord ; there will come no fear on them, neither shall they be grieved. (Sura V. 69). With true insight, Mohammad lays stress on conduct more than on doctrine. Every religion which promotes goodness is worthy of acceptance whatever be its dogmatic details, for if we do the will, we shall know the doctrine "To every one have we given a law and a way. And if God had pleased, He would have made you all one people (professing one religion). But He hath done otherwise that He might try you in that which He hath severally given unto you; wherefore press forward in good works. Unto God shall Ye return and He will tell you that concerning which Ye disagree" (Sura V 48 *). According to the Qu'ran Moslems are "those who believe and work righteousness," all those "who trust

* See also XXI 46 ; XXXII, 23, 24 ; XXXIX, 41 ; XL, 13.

in the Lord and do good".* In conformity with this view, H. H. The Aga Khan said the other day that Mahatma Gandhi was a Moslem. Even Jesus did not say, "By their beliefs Ye shall know them" but he said, "By their fruits Ye shall know them" and Peter rightly observes. "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." †

Sir Ahmed Hussain is not wrong when he says that Islam "is not inconsistent with *true* Christianity or any other *true* religion" (p. 12) for all religions have for their essence the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Only the sectarian dogmatic creeds fight one another. The faith of Jesus is akin to the faith of Mohammad. But when St. Paul asks us to believe in Jesus as our saviour, the very God descended into humanity, a proposition which thinking Christians find it increasingly difficult to defend—Christianity becomes opposed to Islam which is naturally tempted to put forward equal claims for Mohammad. To the credit of Islam, it must be said that its view of Mohammad is a reasonable one. It regards him as a prophet or a messenger of God who reformed the religion of a considerable part of mankind. For all that, he was only a man like any other mortal, subject to sin and having need as other men, of the mercy of God. "It is not Islam or

* Psalms.

† Acts X, 34-35.

Eman to deify Mohammad or to represent him to be akin to God, as sometimes some moulvies represent him and call him the one (Ahad) in the guise of Ahmad. "Our prophet himself never claimed that he was anything more than a mere man" (p. 37). "God has not sent me" says Mohammad, "to work wonders. He has sent me to preach to you. I never said that Allah's treasures are in my hand, that I knew the hidden things or that I was an angel...I who cannot even help or trust myself unless God pleaseth" (Sura XVII, 95-98; LXXII, 21-24). Yet the devotion and enthusiasm of his first followers were so great that legends arose round the figure of Mohammad. On the night the Prophet was born, it is said, the palace of Chosroës was thrown down by an earthquake, the sacred fire of the Magi was extinguished, the lake of Sawa was dried up, the Tigris overflowed, and all the idols of the world fell with their faces to the ground. These traditions, fortunately, never became consecrated legends. Thanks to the scepticism and incredulity of his early Arab followers, even the stories about Mohammad's nocturnal journey to Jerusalem and the voice of God hailing him as His apostle in his wanderings near Mecca, never became so essential to the religion of Islam, as say, those of Ascension and Resurrection to the religion of Christianity. Even the Messiahship of the prophet is not always revered. Witness the movement of the Wahabis, who proclaim that worship of God consists in prostrating oneself before Him that the invocation of an intercessor near him is an act of

idolatry and that the most meritorious work would be to raze the tomb of the prophet and the mausoleums of the Imams!

It is impossible for a thinker like Mohammad to advocate forced conversions. We cannot compel men to change their beliefs. "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (Sura II. 257.) "Wilt thou then force men to believe, when belief can come only from God?"* It is doubtful whether Mohammad had any idea of the conversion of non-Arabs to Islam. Religious persecutions and forced conversions which have soiled the fair name of Islam are repugnant to its true spirit. Omar, the persecutor of Islam who later became its apostle, first drew the sword against those who did not blindly admit the beliefs of Islam and the crude practices of some of Muhammad's followers led to the popular view that those who die fighting for their religious beliefs are the truer martyrs. The Indian Moslem shares with his Hindu brother, faith in the freedom of conscience. Sir Abdur Rahim said the other day, "It is a wholly false notion that the religion and law of Islam enjoin conversion by force."† The Khilafat movement, whatever be its political value, has certainly helped the cause of religious freedom. Sir Charles Townshend, the defender of Kut-el-Amara wrote recently: "The Hindu population of India has made the cause of religious freedom of all the races of India its own."‡ The spirit of India

* Amir Ali : *The Spirit of Islam* p. 212.

† *Calcutta Review*, May 1923.

‡ *Asia*, December 1922.

is teaching Islam to relax some of its severer aspects. Through the interaction of Islam and Hinduism which are to-day looking towards each other, India's vision of harmonising the different religious systems that have met on her soil will be promoted.

III

We may now turn to the doctrinal aspect of Islam and inquire whether its conception of God is radically opposed to the Hindu view. While all religions agree about the objective reality of God, the character of the God worshipped is supposed to give distinction to each religion. According to the Hindu view, no ideas can bring out the mystery of God. God cannot be defined through logical symbols but can be realised in the depths of the soul. If a definition is demanded, we cannot help using the resources at our disposal. We are familiar with our own consciousness and so interpret the nature of God on its analogy. God becomes the Divine personality possessing the three characteristics of truth, love and perfection, or wisdom, beauty and power, or infinitude, grace and sovereignty, answering to the three aspects of our conscious life, cognition, emotion and will. The Hindu conception of Trimurti is intended to bring out this threefold nature of Godhead. God as Brahma creates, as Vishnu redeems and as Siva judges. Brahma creates things to suit His ideal forms. His infinite understanding is reflected in the infinite world which was, is and will be. Vishnu is the principle of love at the heart of

the infinite power and universal rule. He helps us in our wrestlings with evil and gives a push to the upward ascent. Siva is the judge, the infinite power, "able to do anything, or leave it undone or do in another manner than that in which it is actually done."* Whatever name he may give to his God the Hindu has in view this unity of light, love and life. Sir Ahmed Hussain believes that all religions profess belief in one and the same reality, "one and only one God who is Infinite and Absolute, who hath neither beginning nor end, and who is not conditioned or limited by anything whatever. Yezdan, Isvara, Jehovah, God, Allah are the names in different languages of the same Infinite and Absolute God."

The absolute character of God and its incomprehensibility by the finite mind are brought out in many passages of the Qu'ran. The very first verse says: "Say, He alone is God, God the Eternal. He begetteth not and is not begotten, there is none like unto Him" While everything else in the world is liable to change and extinction, God alone *is*. He is the rock in the maelstrom of events in space and time on which we can take our stand, the only hope with which we can face the darkness of the world, its sins and iniquities and yet nothing in the world of space and time is an adequate symbol of the wealth of God. "Sight perceives Him not, but He perceives men's sights; for He is the knower of secrets, the Aware." (Sura VI. 104). Caliph Ali condemns all

* Kartum akartum anyathakartum samarthah.

anthropomorphic conceptions of God. "God was not like any object that the human mind can conceive, no attribute can be ascribed to Him which bore the least resemblance to any quality of which human beings have perception from their knowledge of material objects. The perfection of piety consists in *knowing* God; the perfection of knowledge is the affirmation of His verity: the perfection of verity is to acknowledge His unity in all sincerity, and the perfection of sincerity is to deny all attributes to the Deity. God has no relation to place, time or measure,"* Man cannot be content with this negative ideal and so he insists on looking upon God as a person. The opening verse of the Qu'ran says "Praise be to God, Nourisher of the words, the Compassionate, the Merciful and King of the day of reckoning" while Vaishnavism and Christianity lay the greatest stress on God as love, Judaism and Islam exaggerate the aspect of God as power. God is Omnipotent Energy and the Eternal Judge. Mohammad frequently speaks of the day of reckoning, when the deeds done by man shall be weighed by the Eternal Judge, when heaven and earth shall be folded up and none be near but God. The other aspects are not however neglected. God is not merely the Judge but also "the forgiver of sin, receiver of penitence" (Sura XL, 1-2), the guide of the erring, the deliverer from every affliction, the friend of the bereaved, the consoler of the afflicted, whose love "is more tender than that of the motherbird for her

* Quoted in *The Spirit of Islam* p. 416.

young."* Passages emphasising the love of God frequently occur. "Have mercy, O Lord, for of the merciful Thou art the best" (Sura XXII-118). "Is not He the more worthy who answereth the oppressed when they cry to Him and taketh off their ills, and maketh you to succeed your sires on the earth?" (Sura XXVII 62). Seek pardon of your Lord and be turned unto Him, verily my Lord is merciful, loving" (Sura XI, 90) "Say O my servants, who have transgressed to your own injury. despair not of God's mercy, for all sins doth God forgive. Gracious, merciful is He" (Sura XXXIX. 53). The very name *Ar-Rahman* with which each chapter opens expresses the conviction that divine love enfolds all creation. It works in man so as to remove the veil from the heart of the creature and draw Him near to God. God is also the creator and nourisher of the world. He is not so much a cold distant deity separated from the World as the Indwelling Presence in nature and history. "God is in the East and the West. Therefore whichever side you turn, you will see the face of God" (I. 115) "And He is within you Why do you not see Him?" (LI. 21). "We will soon show them our sight in all horizons and in their own souls, until it shall become quite clear to them that it is the truth." (XII. 53) The three attributes of creation redemption, judgment are assigned to God and the emphasis on Divine unity saves us from tritheism.

* *The Spirit of Islam.* pp. 150, 157.

The individual soul is made by God and it has no rest until it returns to God. Its complex nature should be made an offering to God. We must use our intellect so as to recognise the presence of God in all things. Belief in the existence of the Supreme naturally produces the sense of entire dependence on God. We pray to God and express in meek humility our thankfulness to Him. The central theme of all prayers is self-humiliation, glorification of the giver of all good and reliance on His mercy. We pour out our grateful hearts through prayers which can be offered anywhere on God's earth. We seek His guidance in daily life and struggle to live up to His ideal. Whether we begin with a logical search for reality (jnana) or prayerful devotion to God (bhakti) or submission to His laws the end is the same.

The ethics of Islam is of an exalted character. If we are to be worthy of our Father in heaven, we should do nothing which denies the divine origin of man. To develop the truly religious spirit, Moham-mad enjoins the observance of prayer, fasting, alms giving and pilgrimages and practice of self-denial. Universal charity is insisted on. Hospitality becomes a religious duty. Chastity is recognised as a virtue. Drunkenness, gambling and other excesses are condemned. Moral life constitutes the essence of piety. "Those who abstain from vanities and the indulgence of their passions, give alms, offer prayers, and tend well their trusts and their covenants, these shall be the heirs of eternal happiness" (Sura XXIII, 8).

'Every Moslem who clothes the naked will be clothed' by God in the green robes of Paradise." * Ibrahim Ben Adhem's story which is the basis of Leigh Hunt's well-known poem *About Ben Adhem* points the moral that the friend of man is the friend of God. Whatever the actual practice of the mass of Mohammadans may be, the religion of Islam is not indifferent to animal life but insists on its sacredness. "There is no beast on earth, nor bird which flieth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto you—unto the Lord shall they return." † In the matter of animal sacrifices, the Indian Moslem should remember the significant verse of the Qu'ran. "It is not the flesh or the blood of that which Ye sacrifice which is acceptable to God, it is your piety which is acceptable to the Lord." (Sura XXII 37). Forgiveness and non-resistance are not supposed to be a part of the religion of Islam. It is worth while, in this connection, meditating on the spirit of the following passages: "Turn away evil with that which is better." (Sura XLI 34) Speaking of paradise Mohammad says, "It is prepared for the goodly who give alms in prosperity and adversity, who bridle their anger and forgive men; for God loveth the beneficent" (Sura XLII 7). The many minor details about food, divorce etc., are not directly connected with the religion of Islam. Though Mohammad laid down certain injunctions about them, having in view the circumstances of his time, there is

* *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 54.

† *Ibid* p. 158.

nothing sacrosanct about them. As the Hon'ble Mr. Amir Ali puts it, "with regard to the sumptuary regulations, precepts and prohibitions of Mohammad, it must be remembered that they were called forth by the temporary circumstances of the times and people. With the disappearance of such circumstances, the need for these laws has also disappeared. To suppose therefore that every Islamic precept is necessarily immutable is to do an injustice to history and the development of the human intellect." The Prophet did not inculcate the subjection of human reason to blind authority. A religion which is so strictly limited by commonsense on all sides cannot be made to support inhuman practices to-day. It is for the leaders of Indian Moslem opinion to decide in what details the actual practices of the Indian Moslems require modification if they should live up to the ideal of loving one another, bearing injustice without rebellion, doing harm to none and devoting oneself to universal peace and goodwill.

Those who do not deny the injunctions of the Qu'ran will have a terrible time of it on the day of judgment while those who conform to them will return unto their Lord, their source and support. The ascension of Mohammad is symbolic of the union of the finite and the infinite. Sufism makes out that the end of human development is oneness with God, for he who beholdeth God is Godlike. Jalal-ud-din Rumi describes the ascent of men to God through the various stages in these words :—

"From the inorganic we developed into the vegetable
kingdom,

Dying from the vegetable we rose to animal,

And leaving the animal we became men,

Then what fear that death will lower us ?

The next transition will make us an angel,

Then shall we rise from angels and merge in the Nameless,

All existence proclaims, "Unto Him shall we return'."

Union with God is the end of life. The Sufi Al-Hujviri says, "when a man becomes annihilated from his attributes he attains to perfect subsistence, he is neither near nor far, neither stranger nor intimate, neither sober nor intoxicated, neither separated nor united; he has no name or sign or brand or mark '* While the Sufi doctrine holds absorption in God as the goal of perfection, the Qu'ran gives us vivid pictures of the kind of life which the liberated enjoy. The descriptions of this life are realistic and somewhat sensuous too. They are not however to be literally interpreted. "O, thou soul which art at rest return unto thy Lord, pleased and pleasing Him, enter thou among my servants and enter thou my garden of felicity" (LXXXIX 27-30) The two views correspond to those held by the absolutistic and theistic interpretations of the Vedanta. The process of the growth of personality cannot stop until the end of perfection is reached and the future will have opportunities for the development of character.

The future depends on our present life. "Yonder will every soul experience that which it hath bargained

* *The Spirit of Islam* p. 172. 212.

for" (X 30). Paradise or hell is the result of our own actions. It is also sometimes urged that the silent inscrutable will of God directs all things. In the later history of Islam, the problem of the reconciliation of Divine sovereignty with human responsibility figures much. There are passages in the Qu'ran which seem to indicate that God acts in an arbitrary manner. "He pardons what He will and punishes whom He will inasmuch as God is a supreme sovereign." (II 184; See also III, 25 : V. 18; XIII 31) "Verily God leads astray whomsoever He will and directs to Himself those who are penitent" (XIII 27). There are also passages which emphasise human responsibility. "No soul shall labour but for itself, and no burdened one shall bear another's burden" (II. 286) "Whosoever gets to himself a sin, gets it solely on his own responsibility" (IV. III) "Whoever goes astray, he himself bears the whole responsibility of wandering" (X. 108). Sir Ahmed Hussain contends that fatalism is not a part of the Moslem creed (p. 12, noted). "The Prophet distinctly taught that we should first of all do whatever lies in our power and then leave the rest to God. We are apt to forget the first part of his precept and cling to its second part only which accords with our tropical laziness" (R. 102 A note b). Man is not the sport of fate. He has the freedom to choose the right or the wrong. God does not compel us to good or evil but shows us the way to truth and purity and helps us to observe the laws though He punishes us when we neglect them. Caliph

Ali says: "O, Ye servants of my Lord, fulfil the duties that are imposed on you, for in their neglect is abasement; your good works alone will render easy the road to death. Remember each sin increases the debt and makes the chain heavier. The message of mercy has come; the path of truth is clear; obey the command that has been laid on you; live in purity, work in piety and ask God to help you in every endeavour and to forgive your past transgressions."* The decrees of God are only the laws of the spiritual world. God helps those who seek His help and bestows grace on the penitent sinner who likes to purify his soul from impure longings. Caliph Ali says: "say not that man is *compelled*, for that is attribution of tyranny to God, nor say that man has absolute discretion—rather that we are furthered by His help and grace in our endeavours to act righteously, and we transgress because of our neglect (of his commands)."[†]

Islam is a religion without mystery. Its simplicity is its strength and beauty. It does not indulge in any theological subtleties, supernatural paradoxes or metaphysical pretensions. It is natural religion with one central principle that God makes, upholds governs and perfects all things. This serene lofty theism is best suited for the simple-minded and the unsophisticated. On its institutional side, it is perfectly rational. It has no caste or priests, requires no sacrifice or ceremonial, recognises no

* *The Spirit of Islam*. p. 409.

† *Ibid* p. 410.

ritual likely to distract the mind, from the thought of the one God. Pilgrimage to Mecca and the shrine of Kaaba is the only external aid insisted on by Mohammad from a purely practical motive. During prayers, the Moslem turns his face towards Mecca, the glorious centre from which was announced first the gospel of Mohammad (Sura II 139, 144). Attention to Mecca helps the Moslem to realise that he is one of the band of the faithful, united by common allegiance to Mohammad as the Prophet of God, filled with the same hopes, reverencing the same thing, and worshipping the same ideals. Democracy is the keynote of Islam on its practical side. This is what enabled it to succeed as a missionary religion. It invites every human being to its ample fold, whatever be his colour or race. It recognises the capacity of all to become the servants of God.

" In each human spirit is a Christ concealed,
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed.
If from any human soul you lift the veil,
You will find a Christ there hidden without fail ".*

The Moslems face without fear the logical implications of the doctrine of *Tat tvam asi* and make no distinctions between man and man, at any rate in their mosques. The same cannot be said of Hindu temples or Christian churches, in spite of all the lip homage paid to the principle of equality of all men in the eyes of God. The simple creed of Islam, careful of its two principles of Divine Fatherhood and human brother-

* Claude Field. *The Mystics and Saints of Islam*. p. 159.

hood has been potent enough to expel from many dark places of the earth, barbarous practices, and train millions of mankind to a better life. It has helped the backward races to escape from the labyrinth of sensuous polytheism and get rid of their devil worship and fetishism, infanticide and human sacrifices, magic and witchcraft. It will have a great future, if it cuts off with an unsparing hand the poisonous outgrowths and realises its two central principles in life.

Hinduism has not sufficiently profited from her experience of Islam. It is quite true the Reform movements such as those of Chaitanya, Kabir, and Nanak were much influenced by the spirit of Islam. The monotheistic elements of Hinduism have become more emphasised after the spread of Islam in India. Yet Hinduism could easily have learnt more. Ignorance of others' faith is the mother of injustice and error. Some of the practices of the uncultured Moslems blinded the eyes of the Hindus to the ideals of Islam. While there is much for Islam to learn from a sympathetic understanding of Hinduism, there is also much for Hinduism to learn from Islam. For one thing, Hinduism must learn to be less compromising and more emphatic in its denunciation of imperfect conceptions of God and cruder modes of worship. Hinduism fondly believed that truth would slowly work its way and lower conceptions would be themselves repudiated. As surely as darkness flies before the rays of the sun, Hinduism thought, so surely will falsehood vanish

before truth. This has remained a pious hope. Those who are aware of the highest conceptions of God are found engrossed in the most revolting practices of barbarism. Those who glibly talk of *ahimsa* are seen encouraging animal sacrifices. Hinduism need not give up its tolerance but it should see to it that its judgment of values is kept up and progress is steadily achieved. We must also learn to democratise our institutions and do away with the wrangling creeds, unintelligible dogmas and oppressive institutions under which the soul of man is literally crushed. Both Islam and Hinduism at their best teach that true religion is to serve God in truth and purity and obey His laws reverently in all the affairs of life.

HINDU THOUGHT & CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

IN a paper by Mr. Greaves on Hinduism contributed to the Oxford Conference,* it is said, 'Speaking broadly, Hindus are often about as far in advance of the Hinduism they profess as are nominal Christians behind the Christianity which they are supposed to obey.' This judgment is a generous one, so far as Hindu practice is concerned, though its implication that Hindu thought is unworthy of this practice is open to question. We are all too ready to condemn what we do not understand and those who judge Hinduism from without are not able to understand its vitality. The great things for which men have lived and died, and are still living and dying, cannot be grasped without the exercise of the spirit of what is well called 'natural piety.' If with this feeling we put ourselves at the point of view of the other religions, we shall see that the same fundamentals are found emphasised in all religions, that God is, that man stands in some relation to God, and that intercourse of some kind is possible between God and man who has in him the desire to be in harmony with God. The differences among the living progressive religions of the world relate to accents and emphases, which are traceable to social

* *Modern Churchman*, October 1922.

environments and historic circumstances. It is a matter of great satisfaction, that, under the impulse of higher criticism, the increasing knowledge of nature, idealist philosophy, comparative religion, the psychology of the religious consciousness and a deeper acquaintance with mystic experience, Christian thinkers are engaged in a re-construction of belief, that brings Christianity near the Hindu religion and promises to bridge the gulf that separates the Christian and the other religions. It is my endeavour in this paper to state briefly—a systematic discussion is not possible in a single article—some of the fundamentals of the Hindu faith so as to indicate its affinities to the Christian doctrine. By the fundamentals of Hinduism, I mean those common ideas which have characterised the different forms of Hinduism in their long history, regarding the problems of God, man and his future.

I

According to the Hindu view, the mystery of God cannot be comprehended by the mind of man. Many scriptural texts lay stress on the inadequacy of the finite mind to the subtlety of God's nature. There are endless attributes and aspects in the Supreme of which we, human beings, have no knowledge. No Hindu, however, rests content with this negative view. He insists on interpreting the nature of God on the analogy of his own personality, which is a complex of cognitions, affections and desires. He speaks of God as a personal being, *purusha*, with qualities of thought, love and power. All the time, he is conscious

that God's personality is only a mask, the revelation of something higher under this form. God's personality is not the limited and exclusive one which the human is; for in God we live, move, and have our being.

Since God's personality is the unity of wisdom, love and goodness, His activities in relation to the world are those of creation, redemption and judgment. *Brahma*, representing the cognitive aspect of God, creates; *Vishnu*, representing God as love, redeems; *Shiva*, who is God as omnipotent power and perfection, judges. The order of the universe reflects the mind of God. The transformation of the eternal ideas of God into the plane of space-time is a gradual one. All things struggle continuously to get rid of their imperfections that they might conform to their eternal archetypes, that is, realise God's purpose for them. The cosmic process is a continuous evolution where things develop new and higher qualities in conflict with the old ones. The conception of *Brahma* brings out the infinitude of God and His unceasing creative activity. The aim of God's creation is the manifestation by His creatures of their divine origin and destiny. Of all objects of God's creation only man can manifest fully the character of his origin and reveal the truth of things. God, when He created man, presented to him the ideal which he should elect, the law which he should obey, if he is to realise his destiny. The *Bhagavadgita* (III. 10) says, '*Brahma* created man along with the law of sacrifice.' The law is the means by which we can realise God's ideal for us and grow

into His likeness. But we forget our origin, forget our place in the plan of God, forget the law of sacrifice, and lose ourselves in selfish pursuits. It is then that the need for God's redemptive power arises. The All-great *Brahma* is the All-loving *Vishnu* too. His love and grace are around us, behind what appears as space-time, the material world, organic life and human history. *Vishnu* the all-pervading, actively helps every human soul to fight against sin and stupidity. He is the central core of our being, serving as an inner light, which is too holy to consent to any evil, too real to cling to the fleeting and too loving to regard anything as alien to itself. He is God the redeemer and is the security that the world is progressing towards the good. But He does not act against our will. His redemptive activity takes place in accordance with the order created by *Brahma*. God does not care to exalt Himself by condemning the laws of creation which His own fingers framed. Though *Vishnu* is ever ready to help us, our sin and stupidity constitute barriers against the operation of His grace. Even though we have sinned and thus betrayed the God in us, yet if we turn to God in faith, He helps us out of our difficulty. 'Even if the very wicked worship me, with devotion to none else, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon does he become righteous and attain to eternal peace. Boldly canst thou proclaim that my devotee is never destroyed,' says *Krishna* in the *Gita*.^{*} There is thus a chance for even the worst

^{*} IX. 30-31.

sinner. God is not merely truth and love, but also justice. He is the embodiment of power and perfection, the judge of good and evil, the lord of karma, *karmadhyaksah*. When we sin, it is *Siva* the judge, who punishes us.

Brahma, *Vishnu* and *Siva* are not three different persons but three different aspects of one God, who has no second, distinguished according to His different functions. *Brahma* creates us with certain potentialities, *Vishnu* helps us to realise them through the overcoming of opposition and *Siva* signifies the victorious self-maintenance of the good. As the *Taittiriya Upanishad* puts it, 'the source from which all things come, that by which they are sustained and that into which they enter' are one. God is the truth, the way and the life. He is one viewed as threefold, *eka eva tridha smrtah*. Creation, redemption and judgment are the three fundamental aspects of the creative evolution.

When we regard the Supreme as Divine self-consciousness functioning in the three ways of creation, redemption and judgment, it follows that the world, with reference to which these functions have a meaning, is organically related with God. The world is the body of God, according to some *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavadgita* and theistic *Vedānta*. Hindu thought is not afraid of asserting the presence of God in all things. It has no faith in a transcendent God distinct from the world, living in a monotonous solitude of His own. *Krishna* says in the *Gita*, that all the beauty of the

world, all its truth, all its goodness are so many modes in which God is manifested, of whose glory nature is the veil, of whose word it is the expression, of whose thought it is the embodiment. This, however, is not pantheism in the crude sense of the term. Distinctions are made between the ideal and the actual, the good and its opposite. Hinduism insists on the need for self-transcendence on the part of man. This means that there is something beyond what actually is, that man is struggling to realise. The necessity for redemption shows that there are elements from which we are to be redeemed. If all that is, is equally divine, there would be no need for redemption or judgment. God is not only in nature as its life but is beyond it, as its Creator, its Lord and its Judge. Hinduism does not subscribe to the Hegelian identification of the process of the world with the life of the Absolute. The world is rooted in God, but God does not die if the world perishes. In His own being He is independent of the world and above it. His spirit moves in the world, informing it, governing it, and yet it is by itself beyond it all.

That the water of a stream is purer at its source is certainly true of the religion of Christianity. If we turn to the life and sayings of Jesus, we get a clear idea of the central principles of Christianity. Yahweh of the Old Testament was essentially a national deity. Though some prophets like Hosea and Isaiah regarded Him as the God of the whole earth, they did not altogether escape from their provincial views. Even

for them Israel remained God's chosen race and the heathen nations who would submit to His authority and come to worship at Zion would occupy a position of subjection. Jesus purged the idea of God of all particularism. He was not much interested in God as He is in Himself but revealed to us with remarkable insight the nature of God in relation to man and the world. Though Jesus referred to the three aspects of wisdom, love and power, the then conditions led him to emphasise the love of God. Even the better class of Jewish prophets exaggerated the aspect of God's judgment and His wrath. Isaiah says: 'Men shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake mightily the earth' and Jesus laid stress on the conception of God as Father and His love for us as His children. God is pre-eminently love. He is our redeemer, but the other aspects were not neglected by Jesus. The orderliness of the world reveals the wisdom of God. The sun shines impartially on the just and the unjust, and so does the rain fall. Special providences are not accepted by Jesus* who rebukes the petty egotism which imagines that the natural order of the universe is interrupted to inflict exemplary punishments on evil doers or bring rich rewards to individuals of exceptional merit. He refused to succumb to the temptation to make stones into bread. The physical cures which He effected were all according to law and he

* Luke xiii. 1-5.

could not heal where faith was lacking. God is unalterable truth, and His universe cannot be an anarchic one. God is also the judge. The judgment of God is the dominating note of the Bible. From the sentence upon Adam and Eve and the condemnation of Cain, down to the closing vision of St John's Apocalypse, we have stress on the sovereignty and judgment of God. At the end of the day, it is God's purpose that will triumph. The Christian Church, in the spirit of the Hebrew prophets appeals more to the terror of judgment and the wrath of God than to the sense of guilt and the grace of God.

When the followers of Jesus raised Jesus to the rank of God, the three aspects of *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva*, infinitude, grace and sovereignty, wisdom, love and power were attributed to Him. He is Logos or Wisdom or Word of God, who was before Abraham was. He is the Saviour who revealed His heart of love on the cross at Calvary. He is the judge who pronounces sentence on all who offend Him. 'He that cometh after me,' says John the Baptist, 'will gather up His wheat into the garner but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire' He will 'separate the sheep from the goats.'*

The doctrine of the Trinity not only sought to provide a place for Jesus in the unity of God but also tried to correct the onesided view of God adopted in the Old Testament. God is not merely the infinite majesty seated on high (the Father), but is also the

* Matthew xxv. 31-46.

heart of love (the Son), and the immanent principle of the world process (the Holy Spirit). God is not the transcendent, remote from the world, but Infinite love who pours Himself out unwearyingly into the uplift of the world. Abelard and, in a manner, Aquinas support the view of the Father as power, the old Yahweh exercising judgment (*Siva*), the Son as the Logos, Word or Wisdom, the principle of creation (*Brahma*), and the Holy Spirit as pervading love (*Vishnu*). On this view, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit correspond to the Vedantic formula of *Brahman* as *Sat*, *Chit*, and *Ananda*—reality, wisdom and joy. One thing is clear, that the doctrine of the Trinity is an attempt to indicate the threefold nature of God. Modern Christian theology is realising that the unity of God is consistent with His three aspects, only if the latter are regarded as modes of His activity and not as three different minds or centres of consciousness.

It is frequently urged that the Hindu view exaggerates the justice of God while the Christian lays more stress on the love of God. This is however not altogether just. There is not much real difference on this question, between the two views. *Vishnu*, or God as love, is ready to help us but He waits for our effort. He does not offer His aid against our will. He cannot save us even when we sin, unless we repent. God will do everything for us, but if we persist in our sin and selfishness and do not turn to Him, law will have its course. God cannot deny Himself. He would

like to forgive all but there are sins which 'shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in that which is to come.' Even the love of God has a method according to which it works. We cannot say that this constitutes a limitation of His power. Omnipotence is not irrationality. Jesus recognises that there are laws of the spiritual world. The parables of the tares, the thief, the hidden treasure, the pearl, the lost* sheep, the talents, the ten virgins and the wedding garment, all imply the law that we shall be saved only by our deeds. The five foolish virgins failed to use their opportunities and so missed their end. If we expect forgiveness, we must forgive, if we would save our lives, we must lose them. Such are the inexorable laws of the spiritual world which even God's love cannot set aside. Salvation is to be earned, God cannot thrust it on us. The implication of the curious doctrine of vicarious sacrifice is that the love of God is tempered by His justice. It assumes that divine justice must be satisfied before God can forgive.

Western Christianity is a product of several influences. Its Jewish heritage which conflicts with the Greek, inclines it to support the transcendent conception of God. For the Jew as well as the Arab, nature seemed dry and barren; to the Greek as to the Hindu it was alive and divine. The latter did not exaggerate the distinction between the sacred and the profane, the nature and the supernatural, the spirit and the flesh.

* Matthew xiii, 24-30; xxiv. 43; xlii. 44; xlii. 45-46; xviii. 12; xxv. 14-30; xxv. 1-13; xxii. 1-14.

Their general conception is confirmed by the spirit of science with its insistence on the essential unity of nature. The all-pervading supremacy of law keeps the lawless at arm's length. The supernatural is at the heart of nature. As Aristotle said, spirit is the form of matter. God is the life of the world. The growing appreciation of the meaning of history and the principle of development, the fresh psychological analyses of the religious consciousness and its growths incline us to see the divine in the normal and not in deviations from it. The view of God, as one who acts upon the world externally, moulding it as a potter does clay, which has had a continuous history in Christendom from Jesus—even He was fettered much by His religious surroundings—through Paul, Augustine, Luther, Calvin etc. is slowly yielding to a more immanent conception. A whole-hearted acceptance of Divine immanence will involve much doctrinal re-adjustment and many of the sacred sentiments which have twined themselves round the old idea will have to be given up. We cannot accept Divine immanence and yet be conventionally orthodox, clinging to the reality of miracles, chosen people, exclusive mediatorship, unique revelations, salvation by grace rather than by development, and damnation at death for the large majority of the human race. Christian theologians are accepting the view of immanence with different degrees of completeness. Though Jesus was much hampered by his Jewish heritage, He yet had a fine faith in God as the indwelling presence in the world. 'The kingdom

of God is within you.' With the Hindu, Jesus believes that the changes of the world are not the results of an occasional interference of God from outside, but are a regular divine progress. The central lesson of the life of Jesus to the Hindu is the undermining of the false antithesis between man and God. Jesus is the example of a man who has become God and none can say where his manhood ends and divinity begins. Man and God are akin. 'That art Thou.' *Tat tvam asi.*

II

The doctrine of the immanence of God in life and history is inconsistent with the theory of unique revelations at particular epochs. Hinduism prefers to think of God's activity as immanent in the whole spiritual development of the race. It yet ticks off some prominent aspects of this continuous development, as indicating in a more striking manner the presence of God. Though divine life permeates, subdues and controls all life on earth, still, the stages, when the higher forms were evolved, when the better types were perfected, reveal more prominently the working of the immanent spirit. These stages are marked by the appearance of the subhuman *avatars*. When man appears on the scene, the problem of morality arises and the continuous redemptive activity of God becomes more manifest when the moral order is sharply disturbed. The restoration of the moral equilibrium demands the appearance of some who embody greater goodness than usual.* These souls who

* See the *Bhagavadgita*, iv. 7-8, see also Professor Hogg's *Redemption from the World*.

support unflinchingly the cause of God, that is goodness reveal more than ordinary beings, the eternal within the temporal, the grain within the husk. These manifestations of spiritual values may be viewed either as the revelation of God or the realisation of the potentialities of man, since these two are different ways of stating one fact. We call them fresh revelations of the depths of God or decisive developments of the possibilities of man. Naturally, the pious view them as deliberate acts of God adopted in divine wisdom to serve His purpose. But the higher thought of India is emphatically of opinion, that God is ever active and love is His very essence and not a mere accidental aberration.

While all men reproduce or incarnate to some extent the nature of God, His truth, love and power, those who are called *avatars* do so in a more striking way and to a greater degree. This is the case with *Rama*, *Krishna* and *Buddha*. Jesus is an *avatar* since His love for the sinful which came out most markedly in His appeal on the Cross, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do', is of a piece with God's love for His children. But that He had a special relation to God, which it is not possible for others to acquire is a proposition which it is very difficult to defend. Nor is there any authentic evidence of it, I venture to submit, in the synoptic Gospels. Stories, of course, there are, as about many others in the pre-Christian and the post-Christian eras, but on such a question they count for little. The Adoptionist

Christology and the Pre-existence theory involve an untenable antithesis between God and man, which is reminiscent of Jewish dualism. The life of Jesus will have no meaning for us, if He had any non-human elements which enabled Him to reach perfection. Faith in the Fatherhood of God compels us to assume that what was possible for Jesus is also possible for other men. The resources of God which were available to Him are open to us, and if we struggle and strive even as He did, we *will* develop the God in us. We are all partakers of God's nature and can incarnate God's love even as Jesus did, if we acquire Jesus' faith in God. At best, Jesus is 'the first born among many brethren.'^{*} The incarnation of God in Jesus is essentially one with the indwelling of God in the other saints of the world. The divine relationship revealed by Him is potentially present in all of us. It is a pious delusion to think that none else than Jesus attained this consciousness of spiritual oneness with God. The history of Hinduism gives several instances of souls who were saved, who had the experience of the oneness of 'I and my Father,' who saw with the eye of the soul the glory of God as it is in its own nature, not merely as momentary gleams breaking through the darkness of the sense world, and enjoyed Him for ever. The nearer the approach to God, the greater is the community of nature between man and God and he who lives in God, not intermittently but constantly can say, 'I am He.' The testimony of the *Rishis* of the

^{*} Romans viii. 92.

Upanishads is confirmed by Jesus and other religious geniuses of the world. Let us hear the Sufi martyr, Al Hallaj: 'I am the Truth, I am He whom I love; and He whom I love is I. We are two souls dwelling in one body. When thou seest me, thou seest Him, and when thou seest Him, thou seest me.' In that condition of at-one-ment, there is no opposition between the human soul and divine. According to Jāmi: "'I' and 'Thou' have here no place, and are but phantasies vain and unreal."*

In our loyalty and devotion to Jesus, we may say that the revelation of God in Jesus is a perfect and complete one and His personality is unapproached in all history. The light of God, it is admitted sometimes with great reluctance, shone clearly no doubt, in some prophetic souls, but it never blazed forth in such unique splendour as in Jesus. All this may be true, but we cannot legitimately object, if the followers, say of Confucius and of Buddha, set up similar claims for their heroes. If it is argued that spiritual experience on a vast scale confirms the divinity and mediatorship of Jesus, similar experience is not wanting for the other great saviours of humanity. Hinduism believes that every *guru* is a saviour inasmuch as he quickens in his disciples the life of God, and develops the seed of the spirit, capable of fructifying in them. Any one who helps us to a complete harmonisation of the finite will of man with the perfect will of God has the power to save us. In some systems like that of the *Saiva*

* Browne: *Literary History of Persia*, I. p. 439.

Siddhanta, the *guru* is said to be the very God who appears out of the fulness of His grace to help man in the upward ascent. It cannot be contended that it is impossible to reach heaven unless it be through the mediatorship of Jesus. It is even admitted that Abraham got there, centuries before Jesus was born.*

It is not easy to follow such a proposition as that all ideal qualities of perfect manhood for all time and all conditions were included in Jesus and His revelation is final and all inclusive. There is no finality with regard to any revelation on earth. God has never said His last word on any subject. He has always more things to tell us than we now can bear.†

A more critical attitude towards the divinity of Jesus is growing among the Christian theologians of the West, who are tending to emphasize more and more the humanity of Jesus. The claims to omniscience and the consciousness of having created the universe are not seriously pressed. On the other hand, more attention is paid to the statements that He 'grew in wisdom,' 'learned obedience by the things which he suffered,' was made 'perfect through sufferings,' and 'hath been in all points tempted as we are.' The travail of the spirit in the wilderness makes Him our brother. He, like us, felt in the presence of the great God that lowly reverence and humility which made Him say, 'Why callest thou me good. There is none good but One, that is, God.' 'My father is

* Luke xvi. 24.

† John xvi. 12.

greater than I.' * Miracles are not adduced as evidence of His divinity. Science is critical of many of them. Psychotherapy is able to explain a few. Jesus Himself never deigned to perform miracles to prove His divinity. On the other hand, He admits that others also are able to do them. 'If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?' † Jesus' own testimony, philosophical truth, and religious experience alike demand that Jesus should be brought into line with the other great saints of God, who has not left Himself without a witness in any clime or age.

III

Man is made in the image of God and so is not naturally depraved. As we now find him, he is, no doubt, handicapped in several ways. These defects are foreign to his true nature and are the result of his abuse of freedom. The Hebrew story

' Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe '

endorses the Hindu view that sorrow and suffering, consequent on sin and stupidity, are produced by man, though God allowed them when he gave us freedom. God, as we saw, does not deal with us as a potter with clay but gave us full freedom to realise our destiny, but man loved his false self and not his

* Mark. x. 18; John xiv. 28.

† Luke xi. 19.

true self and source, God, and thus evil arose. Our sinfulness however does not destroy the immortal glory that is our heritage though it postpones its arrival.

The doctrine of the natural depravity of man, I fear, cannot be sustained. The divine is our nature. The light of God lighteth every man who cometh into the world. 'Thou wouldst not be seeking me if thou didst not possess me' Goethe says

' Were not the eye itself a Sun
No Sun for it could ever shine.
By nothing Godlike could the heart be won
Were not the heart itself divine.'

On this view, conversion is not the birth of anything new, though it is the sudden reversal of the former course of life. Salvation is more a gradual development of the divine in us than a gift due to the grace of God. Modern psychological analysis of the act of redemption informs us that God acts in the development of the individual soul more from within than from without. Grace and development are two aspects of one process though the former suggests something like a spiritual miracle or crisis and the latter implies the continuity of man and God.

The course of discipline which the individual is called upon to undergo, if he is to realise his divine inheritance may be distinguished into three types, answering to the three aspects of conscious life. In the period of the *Upanishads*, God was regarded

primarily as Eternal Truth or Light and the individual was asked to comprehend the nature of God by *sraddha* or faith and *jnana* or wisdom. When we pass to the *Bhagavadgita*, it is the aspect of God as love that becomes more prominent and *bhakti* or devotion to God becomes the chief means of salvation. With the Buddhists and the *Sarvates*, as with the ancient Hebrews, God is the Eternal Righteousness and *tapas* or austere simplicity of life and self-sacrifice become emphasised. Any one of these three methods *jnana*, *bhakti* or *tapas* has the power to transform our life as a whole.

When we undergo this inward renewal of mind, heart and will, when we give up our self-regarding life, we find one which beats in unison with the impersonal and the universal good. This is to be saved. The secret of salvation is not a change of creed but an inward renewal. The kingdom of God is an attitude of the soul. Salvation is a qualitative change which fills the life of man with the spirit of God. What the exact nature of it is, cannot be translated into our terms, coined as they are in the mint of human experience. The glory that shall be, we cannot know fully. If we insist on interpreting the nature of eternal life in the language of logic and time, we have to say that it is an identification of the will of the soul with that of God, or more concretely, it is citizenship in the kingdom of God or *Brahmaloka*, from which there is, no possibility of degradation into the world of *samsara*. *San-kara* declares the impossibility of characterising the

supreme experience of oneness with God and allows, if any logical description is demanded, that it is best to say that that life is dwelling in the city of God. *Kamanuja*, however, believes that nothing higher is conceivable or real.

The ascended Christ says : ' I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go no more out.* ' The expression that ' *he shall go no more out* ' has a family likeness to the Hindu view that the saved soul does not return to the struggle of *samsara*. *Nāpūnarāvṛttiḥ*. Both the Hindu and the Christian views agree with regard to the features of the free souls. Wisdom, love and joy are the fruits of salvation. The saved soul has that perfect confidence in the goodness of things that he is not tossed about by the winds of doctrine and dogma. He has that true love or inward brotherliness. It is not mere refraining from injury or forgiveness of enemies, but positive service of humanity. No great religious leader has failed to pay his homage to the principle of love. *Ahimsa* is a central feature of the ethics of the *Upanishads*. Buddha asks us to do good to them that hate us. In the Book of Exodus, we read, ' If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him.' The forty-fifth chapter of Genesis gives us an idea of the admiration which the ancients had for a magnanimous man. See the superb scene in which Joseph forgives his brethren. Paul quotes from the Book of Proverbs, when he writes to the Romans ' If

* Revelation iii, 12.

thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him to drink.' Of Jesus, it is said, 'Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, threatened not.* The saved soul has not only wisdom and love but also that real joy which is not at the mercy of men and circumstances, the peace or *santi* of which the Hindus speak. It is the joy to which Jesus referred when he said 'My joy I give unto you, and your joy no man taketh from you.'

Apparently there is not very much serious difference between Hinduism and Christianity on the question of the nature and means of salvation, if we do not take into account the doctrine of Atonement, that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' That Jesus helps us to turn away from sin and towards God, as every saint, in some degree, does, is beyond question. But the sacrifice of Christ has no significance for man as a propitiation for sin. Jesus is our Saviour since He gives us evidence in his life of the love of God, which will bear us in all crises and catastrophes. He gives us assurance that it is possible for us to conquer the world, the flesh and the devil and attain perfection. Ritschl rightly contends, "All that we can recognise as the real truth of His existence, is that through the impulse and direction we receive from Him, it is possible for us to enter into His relation to God and the world.†

* Peter ii 23.

† *Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 387.

IV

The doctrines of *karma* and re-birth which distinguish the faith of the Hindus, do not evidently commend themselves to the majority of Christian thinkers who, I am afraid, are mostly misled by misrepresentations. *Moksha* or at-one-ment with God is not possible as long as the individual clings to his separate narrow individuality. Until all traces of this separatist tendency are suppressed, union with the Supreme cannot be realised. We are committed to the world of *samsara* the endless cycle of lives, until we conquer time and reach perfection. This view is not so fantastic as it is generally said to be. If life eternal (*moksha*) means a state which transcends temporal conditions (*samsara*), then so long as we cling to the latter, time, the former, eternity, cannot be attained. Unless we drop the individual point of view and raise ourselves to the universal, we cannot lay hold on the truth. All our efforts to reach the universal standpoint, while retaining the individual, are doomed to disappointment. Moral growth is of this character. It has for its basis the exclusive individual with separate plans, purposes and preferences, confronted by others with similar interests. Through moral effort, the individual can approximate to the goal but never reach it. *Samsara* is the world of individualistic moralism which has for its principle perpetual progress or endless growth and not effective realisation of complete fruition. Kant's ethics gives us an instructive analogy. The imperative of the moral law

demands a total suppression of the sensitive part of man's nature. This end is not realised in our present experience, and so he offers us an infinite future to realise it, but Kant forgets that infinite time is inadequate for an impossible task. *Finite* agents cannot achieve *infinite* perfection, even if they groan and travail to the end of time. Kant prescribes a self-contradictory task. The way out is to knock down the sense of the finite. Only then can we be saved from the unending progress of the finite which yields no satisfaction. Unless we abandon the standpoint of *samsara* by cutting through the chain and lift ourselves up above sensitivity, above space-time, above individuality, there is no release possible. Life eternal can be lived here, and now, if only we discard the separatist viewpoint of mere moralism and rise to the religious level.

In the world of *samsara*, the law of *karma* holds. It is the principle of moral continuity by which all steps on the upward path which we gain through toil and suffering are secured for us, and the character we build conserved, so that we need not re-traverse old steps but always look upwards and onwards. According to the doctrine of *karma*, every man will have chances opened to him until he realises the destiny for which he is intended. If God is love, none can be lost for ever. The redemptive work of God does not cease, until the purpose of God is fulfilled with regard to every being. The sin of man hides but does not destroy his immortal destiny. God's love would not

allow even the worst sinner to slip away from Him completely. If death were the end, God's purpose in creating us would be frustrated, for most of us die unrepentant and in sin. If we do not admit the defeat of God's purpose, which would be a very serious limitation of God's nature, then there must be scope for growth, after death, for all souls, to develop and manifest the God in them. This view seems to be much more consistent with the justice and love of God than the one prevailing in Christendom, which has adopted a hell for the large majority of mankind. A deeper realization of the truth of God as love will lead Christian thinkers to admit development after death.

If God destroys his delinquent children, then we are attributing to God a very primitive instinct which even civilised men have sublimated. If Jesus took little children on His knees and told His hearers that the only way of pleasing God was to become themselves like little children, it is atrocious for us to thrust these citizens of the kingdom of heaven into the fire of hell.

According to St. Paul, 'the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.....waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.' If any souls are doomed for ever without a chance of manifesting themselves as sons of God, then God's ideal consummation for the world has broken down. The doctrine of divine immanence requires us to believe that no man deserves to be thrown into eternal hell. However far he may go astray, he is not a lost soul. None can

shake off the divinity in him, however much he may hide it by his sin, stupidity and selfishness. The unsupported finite, the individual who is not rooted in the eternal, in other words, the man who is not made by God is the only rubbish fit to be cast into hell-fire, but not he who bears the human face divine. He may sin grossly in the life but his immortal destiny cannot be destroyed. Beneath the horrible mask of a Judas, there is the potentially divine face of a Jesus. St. Paul says: 'A veil lieth upon their heart. But whensoever a man shall turn unto the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.' Mark the words '*whensoever a man shall turn unto the Lord*,' that is, at any time in the history of the individual, in this world or in the world to come, if he repents he has a chance. To the Hindu, the case of Dives seems to be the height of tragedy.* In a repentant mood, he begs for a small favour, and that not for himself, and no God cares to listen to his prayer. For there is no escape possible for a soul tormenting in hell. Once dead, the fate of man seems to be settled eternally. Assuming that God is not love but stern justice with fierce indignation against wrong, the treatment of Dives is not even just. Errors unrepented of in this life cannot be punished through all the ages. But even the Old Testament gets over the conception of God as mere justice. Some of the Prophets and Psalmists had a more adequate view. 'The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in

* Luke xvi. 19-31.

mercy.* With such a God who is ready to forgive and welcome back the sinner, Dives has a chance. 'How much more' has he with Jesus' God who is not only the Father who waits at home to receive the prodigal, but also the Shepherd who searches in the mountains for the lost sheep? If God goes out to seek the sinner and bring him back, the repentance of Dives will be a matter of rejoicing to Him. If God is unimaginably good 'exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think,' is this hope of a future, where souls like Dives could develop in their new mood, too good to be true? 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good things to those that ask Him'† If we never can forgive as much as we have been forgiven, then is it right to think that God will not refrain from vengeance? God's illimitable love is the guarantee that there is a boundless future opening before us.

Except for the proposition that God is not the God of the dead but of the living, Jesus did not give any definite account of the future life. His references to it in the parables of the Sheep and the Goats, Dives and Lazarus are coloured by the beliefs of the age in heaven and hell, as geographical areas, full of blessedness and misery, and they are not relevant to the problem. Jesus evidently did not believe in a long interval between death and judgment for the rich glut-

* Psalms ciii. 8.

† Matthew vii. II.

ton and Lazarus had their punishment and reward almost immediately after death. Jesus was not misleading the repentant thief when He said, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.'* The official view that the dead will rise with their physical bodies for judgment after death is not supported by these statements of Jesus. On the orthodox view, it is difficult to know how it fares with the countless dead, in the interval between death and judgment. The only interpretation of heaven and hell consistent with the teaching and character of Jesus is that they refer to qualitative changes in the souls. Heaven symbolises the improvement of the soul and hell its opposite. And there are grades in hell, as well as in heaven, many mansions in God's Kingdom and each man will go to his place in accordance with the strength of his faith and the merit of his life. This is the way in which God's justice operates, as the law of *karma* tells us. As a man uses his chance, so will his progress be and the kind and extent of his use will determine his grade of development. That Jesus had a clear consciousness of the law of spiritual continuity comes out in many of his utterances. He is aware that men shall give account for every idle word which they speak on the day of judgment. All our nameless acts of tenderness and love—'I was an hungered and ye gave me meat'—are quite effective in their results. As the *Bhagavadgita* says, 'even a little good saves us from great fear.' (II. 40).

* Luke xxiii. 43.

This view is in accord with the known facts of the development of human personality. The advance in holiness or perfection is a gradual moral process which cannot be achieved instantaneously. In normal circumstances self-development is a continuous process, with no conceivable limits. Growth is the law of personality and for it, both time and opportunity are necessary. The law of *karma* opens up a vast vista where there will be ample scope for self-development.

This principle rightly insists that our conduct as a whole determines our future. A single incident like baptism does not decide the fate of the individual. The infant which dies soon after baptism and the one without it, will both have practically the same future careers, other things remaining equal. Jesus would certainly be shocked to hear, that, according to his message of love, the penalty for error of belief, or accident of birth in another religion or the misfortune of missing some magical sacrament is continuous burning in hell-fire. It is spiritual growth that a man has made or failed to make that determines his future destiny.

The law of *karma* is criticised as being too mechanical and inconsistent with Divine love. The conception of God as an unfettered despot, who interferes whenever it pleases Him to make certain people sinful and others saintly, is repugnant to Hindu thought. To argue that God's love is not bound by the law of character is to support the Calvinistic

theology of arbitrary and irrational decrees, according to which the elect shall be saved, do what they will, and the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. It is impossible for God to ignore the conduct of men, though His love is so infinite that it supports all who make a start in the right direction. The necessities of the spiritual world demand that repentance should be followed by the forgiveness of sins and that utter self-surrender shall be followed by the grace of God. The moral law is the very being of God and it demands that the experiences to which we shall be subjected shall vary with the moral quality of our deeds. The constancy of God is not opposed to the love of God. The theory of divine immanence tells us that God's judgment does not come from anything external. It works from within. We raise or degrade ourselves by our acts. There is no escape from the law of God, which is closer to us than hands and feet, and is in fact the essence of us all. The law of *karma* tells us that those who violate God's laws must suffer for their violation, though there is possibility of repentance and improvement at every stage.

Those who argue that the Hindu doctrine of *karma* is mechanical because the absoluteness of the law demands that the full debt must be paid, uphold, rather strangely, a worse proposition that it must be paid, somehow, by somebody, if not by the sinner. That one man should suffer for another's sins is intelligible, whatever be its validity. But does not the situation become paradoxical, if not grotesque, when

the sinner complacently accepts that another should suffer for his sin? The view deludes the unthinking into the false notion that they might continue their careers of crime, for God would some day send some angel or Son of His to bear the sin of the world. The way in which orthodox Christian doctrine regards the suffering and death of Jesus, the guiltless victim, is conceivable only if God were a well-made weighing machine. I believe that it is intended to indicate the truth of the Hindu view that love of God and effort on the part of man are both necessary for moral growth.

It is well known that the theory of *karma* is set forth as an explanation for human inequality. Experience shows that all men are not equally favoured in inward disposition or outward circumstances. Heredity and environment contribute materially to the shaping of human souls. If we believe, as Calvin assuredly did, that the world is governed by a loving and intelligent being, we must admit that the diversities of life are not due to accident. Thus far the Hindu can follow the argument; but when Calvin suggests as a solution the theory of election, that the capricious will of God is responsible for the choice of some for salvation and others for perdition, the Hindu hesitates to follow his lead and asks whether there is not a more reasonable alternative. There is no need to adopt such a mechanical view of the relation of God to man. The law of *karma* traces this diversity of endowment to the ordered will of God. The Hindu is not prepared to introduce into the nature of God an element of

utter irrationality. He believes that one increasing purpose manifests itself in the evolution of the universe, and if some become more readily the channels of divine grace than others, it is because they struggled a good deal to earn it in the past. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap' says St. Paul. The law of *karma* accepts this principle and extends it futher and says, 'Whatsoever a man reaps, that he must have sown.' Jesus, to my mind, understood this further implication. When he told the paralytic, 'Courage, my son, your sins are forgiven,' he meant to convey that his suffering was the result of his past sins. The sinner may have forgotten them, but not God. The effects of his sins were lying in the depths of his personality. As modern psychology would say, our past deeds are stored up in the region of the unconscious. Jesus assumes something like the law of *karma*, when he tells the sick man 'sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' (St. John v. 14.) Suffering is not the arbitrary fiat of a judge who inflicts it on us, though we do not deserve it. Suffering forced on us against our will is the wages of sin. We cannot esteem it a privilege and an honour. In that case, those suffering in hell have no reason to be ashamed of themselves. Jesus recognised the value of suffering as a warning against evil and an incentive to good. All this does not apply to suffering voluntarily undertaken. Suffering is for purification until we realise life eternal. When we are perfected we become sharers in the work of God, which is the creation and mainten-

ance of absolute values. Thereafter, all 'suffering' is self-imposed though it is quite distinct in its character from ordinary suffering. *Śiva* drank poison for the redemption of mankind. Buddha, according to the *Mahayana* faith refused to attain *nirvana* for the sake of man. In addition to (1) suffering inflicted on mortals as a punishment for their past sins and (2) 'suffering' seemingly so, undertaken by the free souls of the world, there is a third variety which is called *tapas* in Hindu thought. *Tapas* is the suffering voluntarily undertaken by those who are still on the path way to perfection, for the sake of self-development or world welfare. This is a very difficult undertaking and some of the greatest souls of the world have quailed before it. Witness the scene at Gethsemane. To realise our destiny, the most efficient method is this suffering for the world. *Śiva* the prince of ascetics, or God as Righteousness, expects of His devotees, austere asceticism and self-sacrifice, even as *Brahma* demands meditation and *Vishnu*, devotion. Suffering for the world out of love for it is the price which every son of man has to pay, if he is to be redeemed from evil and manifest himself as a son of God. The Cross is not an offence or a stumbling block to the Hindu, but is the great symbol of the redemptive reality of God. It shows how love is rooted in self-sacrifice. The story of Hinduism has many instances of *Rishis* and *Buddhas* who have sanctified *tapas* and suffered more than they deserved for the sake of the world. This avoidable suffering is not the result of past sins.

Christian thinkers have felt for long uneasy about the doctrine of perpetual torment and devised various schemes which would allow scope for future development. The Council of Florence in 1429 formulated the doctrine of purgatory which is neither hell nor heaven. Dean Farrar suggested an intermediate state of probation in which souls would have an opportunity for repentance. Some theologians take their stand on the vague statements of Peter iii. 19; iv 6, and argue for an intermediate state between death and judgment. While many plead for continuity between this life and the next, only very few are willing to advocate pre-existence. In course of time, however, Western thinkers will be led to discern the elements of value in the Hindu view, which is to-day confused with a good deal of grotesque mythology which no thinking Hindu accepts as literal truth.

V

Indian Christians who breathe the same spiritual air laden with the fragrance of India's past, as their Hindu brethren are deeply imbued with the doctrine of divine immanence. It is becoming increasingly difficult for them to accept the apocalyptic view of the sternness of God and His supernaturalism which threatens disobedience of God's will with tremendously terrific judgments, which looks upon Jesus as the very God of God sent to the world to be crucified as an atonement for the sins of mankind, and contemplates the renewal on a vast scale of the miracle of the resurrection, the coming of Christ in glory on a world

which has rejected Him. The thoughtful, especially among the younger generation of Indian Christians, believe that God works in all men and in the whole world, though Jesus so perfected His nature that He manifested the God in him in a more marked degree than other men. They, of course, think that the life of Jesus which brought out the aspect of redeeming love in the nature of God which was practically ignored by the Old Testament writers, though some of their great prophets like Isaiah were not unaware of it, has the highest ethical significance for us in the present condition of the world. They confidently anticipate the coming of the kingdom of God by the gradual growth of goodness and spread of Christian love though not doctrine. They are deeply concerned when such vital doctrines of Hinduism as the unity and omnipenetrativeness of God, *ahimsa*, *karma*, and re-birth are misrepresented and caricatured, by the non-Indian members of their fold, who have no idea of the evil effects of the relaxing of traditional restraints. Christianity in India to-day hears the call of Hinduism. She may pay heed to it and follow or she may be deaf to it and refrain. But all signs indicate that she is choosing wisely. She is attempting to combine the best elements of Hinduism with the good points of Christianity, and if she succeeds, it is not India alone that will be the gainer by this Hindu Christianity. The spiritual life of the world will increase.

BUDDHISM

BUDDHA, the founder of the religion, is one of the noblest figures in the history of the world. A mass of legends has naturally grown round his person and there are some who even maintain that his whole life from birth to death was a legend. But it may be accepted that Buddha was a prince born to luxury who in the prime of life withdrew into solitude and sought truth through meditation.

It was an age of intellectual ferment. A congeries of conflicting theories and guesses accepted by some and denied by others, changing with men, reflecting the individual whims and wishes filled the air (see *Brahmajala sutta*). Struck by the clashing enthusiasms and the discordant systems, Buddha inferred the futility of metaphysical speculation. In the world of morals, ceremonial observances displaced moral obligations. In the sphere of religion, primitive superstitions lifted up their heads and were being exploited by the interested. Buddha declared that each man could gain salvation for himself without the mediation of priests or reference to gods. Salvation did not depend on the acceptance of doubtful dogmas or doing deeds of darkness to appease angry deities, but on the perfection of character and devotion to the good. An aversion to metaphysical speculation, an absence of theological tendency and an ethical earnestness mark Buddha's teaching.

METAPHYSICS

The four truths which Buddha announced are that there is suffering, that it has a cause, that it can be suppressed and that there is a way to accomplish it. There is suffering because all things are transient. All being is in a state of perpetual becoming. Life is a series of becomings and extinctions. Whatever be the duration of any state of being, as brief as a flash of lightning or as long as a millennium, yet all is becoming. While Buddha distinguishes the momentary (ksanika) character of mental process from the impermanent (anitya) character of non-mental reality, later Buddhists regard all existence as momentary. Each single phenomenon is but a link in the chain, a transitory phase of evolution and the several chains constitute the one whole (dharmadhatu). Substances and souls are reduced to sequences and processes.

If we think of things rather than processes, we are dealing with unrealities. We build a seemingly stable universe through logical relations of substance and attribute, whole and part, cause and effect. These relations are true of our logical world and not of the real. We are naturally led to imagine a permanent core for things though it is an abstraction of thinking. We say it rains while there is no 'it' at all. There is nothing but movement, no doer but deed. We mistake continuity of becoming for identity of things. A child, a boy, a youth, a man and an old man are one. The seed and the tree are one. Continuous succession

gives the appearance of an unbroken identity, even as a glowing stick whirled round gives the appearance of a complete circle. A useful convention makes us give names to the individual series. The identity of name persuades us to the thought of the identity of the inner reality.

The continuity of the world in the absence of a permanent substratum is explained by means of the principle of universal causation. A thing is only a dharma, a cause or a condition. "That being present this becomes ; from the arising of that this arises ; that being absent this does not become ; from the cessation of that this ceases" (Majjhima N. II. 32). It is the doctrine of pratyasamutpada or dependent origination. There is no being which changes ; there is only a self-changing. The world series is not a series of extinctions and fresh creations. One state transmits its paccayasatti (causal energy) to the next. There is a cohesion of the past with the present which is broken up into a succession of before and after in an external treatment of nature.

The world of life and motion obeys a certain order (niyama). It is the presence of law in the world process which offers hope to man in distress. Regarding the nature of the world process, different views prevail. The chief tendency, however, is to look upon it as impermanent though not non-existent. There are suggestions of a purely subjectivist nature. "By the undoing of consciousness wholly remainderless all is

melted away." The world is a product of ignorance and does not exist for the enlightened soul. Individual forms of the world are sometimes said to be the manifestations of certain unconditioned reals. Composite substances disappear when true knowledge arises leaving behind the primary elements. Buddha was not interested so much in analysing the nature of the world of becoming as in helping us to get out of it. "It is not the time to discuss about fire for those who are actually in burning fire, but it is the time to escape from it."

The individual self is a compound where the component parts, mental (name) and material (rupa), are ever changing. Feeling (vedana), perception (samjna), disposition (samskara) and intelligence (vijñana) are the mental factors. Feeling refers to the affectional side, perception and intelligence to the cognitive and disposition to the volitional aspects of mental life. Intelligence sometimes functions as the self. We have no evidence of a permanent self. "When one says 'I' what he does is that he refers either to all the factors combined or any one of them and deludes himself that that was 'I'" (Samyutta N. III. 130). While Buddha contents himself with a statement about the constituents of the empirical self without explicitly rejecting the existence of a permanent self, Nagasena dismisses the permanent self as an illegitimate abstraction and reduces the self of man to a unified complex exhibiting an unbroken historical continuity. As body is a name for a system of

qualities, so soul is a name for the sum total of our mental states.

The conception of the soul retains enough meaning to make rebirth significant. The individual is not a haphazard succession of unconnected phenomena but is a living continuity. The reborn man is not the dead man ; but he is not different from him. There is neither absolute identity nor absolute difference. There is persistent continuity as well as unceasing change. Each experience as it rises and passes leads up to, becomes or ends in another experience, moment or phase of life which sums up the whole past.

ETHICS AND RELIGION

Salvation which consists in the unmaking of ourselves is the goal of life. All forms of conduct which lead to it are regarded as good. The eightfold path—right belief, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right-mindedness and right rapture—represents the morality of Buddhism. It is the middle way between the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. It is intended to transform the whole life of man—intellectual, emotional and volitional.

The institution of caste was in a confused state in the time of Buddha. He undermined the caste spirit by basing Brahminhood on conduct rather than on birth. He was not however a social reformer. His main interest was religion. Though professedly open

to all, his religion was practically limited to the higher castes. He did not interfere with the domestic ritual which continued to be performed according to the Vedic rites. Buddha's mission was not so much to unveil the secrets of blessedness as to win men to its realisation. Nirvana literally means 'blowing out' or 'cooling'. It is the dying out of hot passion, the destruction of the fires of lust, hatred and ignorance. It is not to be confused with the night of nothingness. It is timeless existence full of "confidence, peace, calm, bliss, happiness, delicacy, purity, freshness" (Milinda, 11.2.9.) Yamaka's view of nirvana as annihilation is repudiated as a heresy (Samyutta N III. 103 ff). Since its nature is beyond the horizon of human thought, negative terms are used to describe Nirvana.

We need not regard Buddhism as an entirely fresh start with no roots in the past. It is a later phase of the general movement of thought of which the Upanishads are the earlier. The questions about ultimate reality, the nature of freedom and the permanent character of the self are not answered by Buddha. They are reserved issues on which he does not allow any speculation. He declines to answer Malunkya's questions on the ground that they do not help us in practical life (See also Dialogue of Vaccha). His silence on metaphysical issues is variously interpreted. Some of his early followers and modern interpreters take it negatively. They argue that Buddha did not believe in any permanent reality either cosmic or physical. Nirvana on this view is nothingness.

Buddha, it is sometimes urged, did not expound the negative view for fear that he might startle his followers. This view makes Buddha's philosophy incoherent and his character suspicious. There are positive statements made by Buddha, which are inconsistent with this negative rationalism. Such a barren creed could not have appealed to theistically minded people of Buddha's time. Others hold that his silence was a cloak for his ignorance. He did not know the truth of things. This theory is implausible in view of Buddha's feeling that he was in possession of the truth and could lead men on to it. It is difficult to believe that Buddha himself was ignorant and wished his disciples to remain in ignorance. No thinking man could live without some sort of belief about ultimate values. It seems to be more reasonable to hold that Buddha accepted a positive idealism akin to the thought of the Upanishads, though he did not declare it as his opinion since he insisted on each one's realisation of the truth for oneself. He ignored metaphysical questions, as metaphysical wrangling distracts men from the main business of moral life. It has little to do with the attainment of sanctity which is more spiritual and inward than logical and theoretical. If we do not admit this view it will be difficult to account for the positive descriptions of the state of nirvana and Buddha's consistent refusal to deny the reality of an absolute beyond phenomena. The Benares sermon suggests strongly the reality of an absolute. In view of the obvious.

limits of the human understanding accepted by the Upanishads and Buddha, the latter refused to give positive accounts of it. But within the limits allowed by logic he describes the ultimate principle as dharma or righteousness. In the Upanishads, dharma (righteousness) and satya (truth) are identified. Since Buddha's main interest was ethical he emphasised the ethical nature of the absolute. Dharma takes the place of Brahman. (D. N. III. 232. On this question see *Mind*. 1926. pp. 158-174.)

INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

I

PHILOSOPHICAL DEVELOPMENT

THROUGHOUT the history of Indian thought, the ideal of a world behind the ordinary world of human strivings, more real and more intangible, which is the true home of the spirit, has been haunting the Indian race. Man's never-ceasing effort to read the riddle of the sphinx and raise himself above the level of the beast to a moral and spiritual height finds a striking illustration in India. We can watch the struggle for four millenniums (or longer, if the recent archaeological finds in Sind and the Punjab, which are withdrawing the shroud that hid the remote past, are to be taken into account). The naive belief that the world is ruled by the gods of Sun and Sky, who watch from on high the conduct of men, whether it is straight or crooked ; the faith that the gods who can be persuaded by prayer or compelled by rites to grant our requests, are only the forms of the one Supreme ; the firm conviction that the pure stainless spirit, to know whom is life eternal, is one with the innermost soul of man ; the rise of materialism, scepticism and fatalism, and their supersession by the ethical systems of Buddhism and Jainism, with their central doctrine that one can free one-self from all ill only by refraining

from all evil, in thought, word and deed—God or no God. the liberal theism of the *Bhagavadgita*, which endows the all-soul with ethical in addition to metaphysical perfections; the logical scheme of the Nyaya, which furnishes the principal categories of the world of knowledge which are in use even to-day, the Vaisesika interpretation of nature; the Samkhya speculations in science and psychology; the Yoga scheme of the pathway to perfection; the ethical and social regulations of the Mimamsa and the religious interpretations of the Supreme reality, as put forward by Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and Nimbarka, Vallabha and Jiva Gosvami—form a remarkable record of philosophical development in the history of the human race. Type succeeds type, school follows on school, in logical sequence. The life of the Indian was ever on the move, shaping itself as it grew, and changing from time to time in relation to its physical, social and cultural contexts. In the early stages the ancient Indians were doing everything for the first time. They had practically no wisdom of the past to fall back upon. They had, moreover, enormous difficulties to contend with, which are now almost things of the past. In spite of these, their achievement in the realm of thought and practice is a considerable one. But the cycle is not complete, and the range of possible forms is not exhausted; for the sphinx still smiles. Philosophy is yet in its infancy.

The survey of Indian thought, as of all thought, impresses one with the mystery and the immensity of

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existence as well as the beauty and the persistence of the human effort to understand it. The long procession of thinkers struggled hard to add some small piece to the temple of human wisdom, some fresh fragment to the ever incomplete sum of human knowledge. But human speculation falls short of the ideal, which it can neither abandon nor attain. We are far more conscious of the depth of the surrounding darkness than of the power to dispel it possessed by the flickering torches that we have the privilege to carry as the inheritors of a great past. After all the attempts of philosophers, we stand to-day in relation to the ultimate problems very near where we stood far away in the ages—where perhaps we shall ever stand as long as we are human, bound Prometheus-like to the rock of mystery by the chains of our finite mind.* The pursuit of philosophy is not, however, a vain endeavour. It helps us to feel the grip and the clanging of the chains. It sharpens the consciousness of human imperfection, and thus deepens the sense of perfection in us, which reveals the imperfection of our passing lives. That the world is not so transparent to our intellects as we could wish is not to be wondered at, for the philosopher is only the lover of wisdom and not its possessor. It is not the end of the voyage that matters, but the voyage itself. To travel is a better thing than to arrive.

* "No one," exclaims Xenophanes, 'has attained complete certainty in respect to the gods and to that which I call universal nature, nor will anyone ever attain it. Nay, even if a man happened to light on the truth, he would not know that he did so, for *cessance is spread over all things*' (Gomperz : *Greek Thinkers*, I. p. J)

At the end of our course, we may ask whether the known facts of history support a belief in progress. Is the march of human thought a forward movement, or is it one of retrogression? The sequence is not capricious and unmeaning. India believes in progress, for, as we have already said, the cycles are bound together by an organic tie. The inner thread of continuity is never cut. Even the revolutions that threaten to engulf the past help to restore it. Backward eddies serve rather to strengthen than retard the current. Epochs of decadence, like the recent past of this country, are in truth periods of transition from an old life to a new. The two currents of progress and decline are intermingled. At one stage the forces of progress press forward with a persistent sweep, at another the line sways to and fro, and sometimes the forces of retrogression seem to overwhelm those of progress, but on the whole the record is one of advance. It would be idle to deny that much has perished in the process. But few things are more futile than to rail against the course which the historical past has taken or weep over it. In any case, some other kind of development would have been worse. The more important thing is the future. We are able to see further than our predecessors, since we can climb on their shoulders. Instead of resting content with the foundations nobly laid in past, we must build a greater edifice in harmony with ancient endeavour as well as the modern outlook.

II

THE UNITY OF ALL SYSTEMS

The twin strands which in one shape or another run through all the efforts of the Indian thinkers are loyalty to tradition and devotion to truth. Every thinker recognises that the principles of his predecessors are stones built into the spiritual fabric, and, if they are traduced, one's own culture is defamed. A progressive people with a rich tradition cannot afford to neglect it, though it may contain elements which are not edifying. The thinkers try hard to explain, allegorise, alter and expurgate the traditional lore, since men's emotions are centred round it. The later Indian thinkers justify the different philosophical interpretations of the universe advanced by the earlier ones, and regard them as varying approximations to the truth as a whole. The different views are not looked upon as unrelated adventures of the human mind into the realm of the unknown or a collection of philosophical curiosities. They are regarded as the expression of a single mind, which has built up the great temple, though it is divided into numerous walls and vestibules, passages and pillars.

Logic and science, philosophy and religion are related organically. Every fresh epoch in the progress of thought has been inaugurated by a reform in logic. The problem of method, involving as it does an insight into the nature of human thought, is of great value. The Nyaya points out that no stable philosophy can be built except on the foundations of logic. The

Vaisheshika warns us that all fruitful philosophy must take into account the constitution of physical nature. We cannot build in the clouds. Though physics and metaphysics are clearly distinct and cannot be blended, still a philosophic scheme must be in harmony with the results of natural science. But to extend to the universe at large what is true of the physical world would be to commit the fallacy of scientific metaphysics, and the Samkhya asks us to beware of that danger. The resources of nature cannot generate consciousness. We cannot reduce nature and consciousness the one to the other, as scientific and psychological metaphysics attempt to do. Reality appears not only in science and in human life, but in religious experience, which is the subject matter of the Yoga system. The Purva Mimamsa and the Vedanta lay stress on ethics and religion. The relation between nature and mind is the supreme problem of philosophy which the Vedanta takes up. The saying, that the saints do not contradict one another, is true of philosophies also. The Nyaya-Vaisheshika realism, the Samkhya-Yoga dualism and the Vedanta monism do not differ as true and false but as more or less true.* They are adapted to the needs of the slow-witted (mandadhikari), the average intellect (madhyamadhi-

* Madhava S.D.S. ; Madhusudana Sarasvati's *prasthanabheda* ; Vijnanabhiksu's Introduction to S.P.B. Cp. Kant: "We are in a way maintaining the honour of human reason when we reconcile it with itself in the different persons of acute thinkers and discover the truth, which is never entirely missed by men of such thoroughness, even if they directly contradict each other" (quoted in J. Ward: *A Study of Kant*, p. 11. n. 1).

kari) and the strong-minded (uttamadhikari) respectively. The different views are hewn out of one stone and belong to one whole, integral, entire and self-contained. No scheme of the universe can be regarded as complete, if it has not the different sides of logic and physics, psychology and ethics, metaphysics and religion. Every system of thought developed in India offered its own theory of knowledge, interpretation of nature and mind, ethics and religion. Our knowledge of the universe has grown enormously under the guidance of the natural sciences, and we cannot afford to be satisfied with any restricted outlook on life. The future attempts at philosophic construction will have to relate themselves to the recent advances of natural science and psychology.

III

PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE

Philosophy has for its function the ordering of life and the guidance of action. It sits at the helm and directs our course through the changes and chances of the world. When philosophy is alive, it cannot be remote from the life of the people. The ideas of thinkers are evolved in the process of their life history. We must learn not only to reverence them, but to acquire their spirit. The names of Vasishta and Visvamitra, Yajnavalkya and Gargi, Buddha and Mahavira, Gautama and Kanada, Kapila and Patanjali, Badarayana and Jaimini, Sankara and Ramanuja, are not merely themes for the historian but types of personality. With them philosophy is a world-view

based on reflection and experience. Thought, when it thinks itself out to the end, becomes religion by being lived and tested by the supreme test of life. The discipline of philosophy is at the same time the fulfilment of a religious vocation.

IV

THE DECLINE OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE RECENT PAST

The evidence brought together in this work does not support the general criticism that the Indian mind has a fear of thinking. We cannot dismiss the whole progress of Indian thought with a sapient reference to the oriental mind, which is not sufficiently dry and virile to rise above grotesque imagination and puerile mythology. Yet there is much in the thought-history of the last three or four centuries to lend countenance to this charge. India is no longer playing her historic role as the vanguard of higher knowledge in Asia.* It seems to some that the river that has flowed down the centuries so strong and full is likely to end in a

* Regarding China's debt to India, Professor Liang Chi Cho says: "India taught us to embrace the idea of absolute freedom, that fundamental freedom of mind, which enables it to shake off all the fetters of past tradition and habit as well as the present customs of a particular age—that spiritual freedom which casts off the enslaving forces of material existence. . . . India also taught us the idea of absolute love, that pure love towards all living beings which eliminates all obsessions of jealousy, anger, impatience, disgust and emulation, which expresses itself in deep pity and sympathy for the foolish, the wicked and the sinful—that absolute love which recognises the inseparability between all beings." He goes on to explain the contributions of India to Chinese literature and art, music and architecture, painting and sculpture, drama, poetry and fiction, astronomy and medicine, educational method and social organisations. See *Vishvabharati Quarterly*, October 1924. The influence of India on Burma and Ceylon, Japan and Corea, is well known.

stagnant waste of waters. The philosophers, or rather the writers on philosophy of this period of decadence, profess to be votaries of truth, though they understand by it merely the pious sophistries or the sacrosanct hair-splittings of this or that school of dogmatics. These professional dialecticians imagine that the small brook by their side, trickling away in the sand or evaporating in the fog, is the broad river of Indian philosophy.

A variety of causes have contributed to this result. The political changes brought about by the establishment of the Mohammadan supremacy turned men's minds into conservative moulds. In an age when individual self-assertion and private judgment threatened at every point to dissolve into anarchy the old social order and all stable conviction, the need for authoritative control was urgently felt. The Mohammadan conquest, with its propagandist work, and later the Christian missionary movement, attempted to shake the stability of Hindu society, and in an age deeply conscious of instability, authority naturally became the rock on which alone it seemed that social safety and ethical order could be reared. The Hindu, in the face of the clash of cultures, fortified himself with conventions and barred all entry to invading ideas. His society, mistrusting reason and weary of argument, flung itself passionately into the arms of an authority which stamped all free questioning as sin. Since then it has failed in loyalty to its mission. There were no longer any thinkers, but only scholars who refused to

strike new notes, and were content to raise echoes of the old call. For some centuries they succeeded in deceiving themselves with a supposedly final theory. Philosophy became confused with the history of philosophy when the creative spirit had left her. It abdicated its function and remained wrapped up in its illusions. When it ceased to be the guide and the guardian of the general reason, it did a great wrong to itself. Many believed that their race had travelled long and far towards a goal at which it had at length arrived. They felt rather tired and inclined to rest. Even those who knew that they had not arrived, and saw the large tract of the country stretching into the future, were afraid of the unknown and its ordeals. The silences and the eternities cannot be questioned without peril by the weak of heart. The dizziness of the inquiry into the infinite is a vertigo which even mighty minds try to avoid, if they can. The strongest of human forces are subject to intervals of lethargy, and the philosophic impulse has had in these three or four centuries an attack of lethargy.

V

THE PRESENT SITUATION

To-day the great religions of the world and the different currents of thought have met on Indian soil. The contact with the spirit of the West has disturbed the placid contentment of recent times. The assimilation of a different culture has led to the impression that there are no official answers to ultimate problems. It has shaken the faith in the traditional solutions, and

has, in some degree, helped to a larger freedom and flexibility of thought. Tradition has become fluid again, and while some thinkers are busy rebuilding the house on ancient foundations, others want to remove the foundations altogether. The present age of transition is as full of interest as of anxiety.

During the recent past, India was comfortably moored in a backwater outside the full current of contemporary thought, but she is no longer isolated from the rest of the world. The historian of three or four centuries hence may have much to say on the issues of the intercourse between India and Europe, but as yet they lie hidden from our view. So far as India is concerned, we notice the broadening of men's range of experience, the growth of the critical temper and a sort of distaste for mere speculation.

But there is another side to the picture. In the field of thought, as well as in that of action, the spirit of man is doomed to decay as much in anarchy as in bondage. There is not much to choose between the two, so far as culture and civilisation are concerned. Anarchy may mean material discomfort, economic ruin and social danger and bondage material comfort, economic stability and social peace. But it would be incorrect to confuse the standards of civilisation with economic welfare and maintenance of social order. It is easy to understand the feeling of the Indians of the beginning of the nineteenth century, who after generations of public strife and private suffering welcomed the British rule as the dawn of a golden

age, but it should be equally easy to sympathise with the Indian feeling of the present day that the spirit of man craves, not comfort, but happiness, not peace and order, but life and liberty, not economic stability or equitable administration, but the right to work out one's own salvation even at the cost of infinite toil and tribulation. Even non-political virtues do not thrive in the absence of political autonomy. British rule has given India peace and security, but they are not ends in themselves. If we are to put first things first, then we must admit that economic stability and political security are only means, however valuable and necessary, to spiritual freedom. A bureaucratic despotism which forgets the spiritual ends, for all its integrity and enlightenment, cannot invigorate the peoples beneath her sway, and cannot therefore evoke any living response in them. When the fountains of life are drying up, when the ideals for which the race stood for millenniums, the glow of consciousness, the free exercise of faculty, the play of life, the pleasure of mind and the fulness of peace, *pranaramam*, *mana-anandam*, *santisamrddham*, are decaying, it is no wonder that the Indian is conscious only of the crushing burden and not of the lifted weight. It is no use speaking to him of the magnitude of Britain's work, for the verdict of history is passed on the spiritual quality of the achievement. If the leaders of recent generations have been content to be mere echoes of the past and not independent voices, if they have been intellectual middlemen and not original thinkers, this sterility is to no small

extent due to the shock of the Western spirit and the shame of subjection. The British are aware of the deep-rooted causes of the present attitude of India, whatever it may be called, unrest, revolt or challenge. They tried to bring their civilisation, which they naturally regard as higher, to touch the Indians, and they felt that they should press on in the task of enlightenment and education, good in themselves, without any hesitation or cessation, of effort. But India has no sympathy with this policy of cultural imperialism. She tenaciously clings to her ancient customs which helped her to check the swell of passion, the blindness of temper and the thrust of desire. One who is acquainted with the history of her past can sympathise with her anxiety to dwell in her own spiritual house, for "each man is the master of his own house."* Political subjection which interferes with this inner freedom is felt as a gross humiliation. The cry for Swaraj is the outer expression of the anxiety to preserve the provinces of the soul.

Yet the future is full of promise. If India gains freedom within, then the Western spirit will be a great help to the Indian mind. Hindu thought never developed a Monroe doctrine in matters of culture. Even in the ancient times when India grew enough spiritual food to satisfy her own people, there is no recorded age when she was not ready and eager to appreciate the products of other people's imagination.

* *Sarvas sve sve grhe raja.* Every man is the lord in his own house.

In her great days India conformed to the wisdom of the Athenians, of whom Pericles said : " We listen gladly to the opinions of others and do not turn our faces on those who disagree with us." Our fear of outside influence is proportioned to our own weakness and want of faith in ourselves. To-day, it is true, we bear lines of sorrow in our face and our hair is grey with age. The thoughtful among us have a brooding uneasiness of soul, some are even steeped in pessimism, and so have become intellectual hermits. The non-co-operation with Western culture is a passing episode due to unnatural circumstances. In spite of it, there are attempts to understand and appreciate the spirit of Western culture. If India assimilates the valuable elements in the Western civilisation, it will be only a repetition of parallel processes which happened a number of times in the history of Indian thought.

Those who are untouched by the Western influence are for a large part intellectual and moral aristocrats, who are indifferent to political issues, and adopt a gospel not of confident hope but of resignation and detachment. They think that they have little to learn or to unlearn, and that they do their duty with their gaze fixed on the eternal Dharma of the past. They realise that other forces are at work, which they cannot check or control, and ask us to face the storms and disillusionment of life with the unruffled calm of self-respect. This was the class which in better times was more elastic and was ever renewing the attempts to reconcile rational philosophy with revealed religion.

It had always explained and defended the faith in the face of heretics and unbelievers, and had recourse to the allegorical method as the instrument of theological interpretation. * * * * *

The thinkers of India are the inheritors of the great tradition of faith in reason. The ancient seers desired not to copy but to create. They were ever anxious to win fresh fields for truth and answer the riddles of experience, which is ever changing and therefore new. The richness of the inheritance never served to enslave their minds. We cannot simply copy the solutions of the past, for history never repeats itself. What they did in their generation need not be done over again. We have to keep our eyes open, find out our problems and seek the inspiration of the past in solving them. The spirit of truth never clings to its forms but ever renews them. Even the old phrases are used in a new way. The philosophy of the present will be relevant to the present and not to the past. It will be as original in its form and its content as the life which it interprets. As the present is continuous with the past, so there will be no breach of continuity with the past.

One of the arguments of the conservatives is that truth is not affected by time. It cannot be superseded, any more than the beauty of the sunset or a mother's love for a child. Truth may be immutable, but the form in which it is embodied consists of elements which admit of change. We may take our spirit from the past, for the germinal ideas are yet vital, but the

body and the pulse must be from the present. It is forgotten that religion, as it is to-day, is itself the product of ages of change, and there is no reason why its forms should not undergo fresh changes so long as the spirit demands it. It is possible to remain faithful to the letter and yet pervert the whole spirit. If the Hindu leaders of two thousand years ago, who had less learning and more light, could come on earth again after all these centuries, they would seldom find their true followers among those who have never deviated from the most literal interpretations of their views.* To-day a great mass of accretions have accumulated, which are choking up the stream and the free life of spirit. To say that the dead forms, which have no vital truth to support them, are too ancient and venerable to be tampered with, only prolongs the suffering of the patient who is ailing from the poison generated by the putrid waste of the past. The conservative mind must open itself to the necessity of change. Since it is not sufficiently alive to this need, we find in the realm of philosophy a strange mixture of penetrating sagacity and unphilosophical confusion. The chief energies of the thinking Indians should be thrown into the problems of how to disentangle the

* Cp. Aurobindo Ghosh: "If an ancient Indian of the time of the Upanishad, of the Buddha, or the later classical age were to be set down in modern India . . . he would see his race clinging to forms and shells and rags of the past and missing nine-tenths of its nobler meaning. . . he would be amazed by the extent of the mental poverty, the immobility, the static repetition, the cessation of science, the long sterility of art, the comparative feebleness of the creative intuition" (*Arya*, v. p. 424).

old faith from its temporary accretions, how to bring religion into line with the spirit of science, how to meet and interpret the claims of temperament and individuality, how to organise the divergent influences on the basis of the ancient faith. But, unfortunately, some of the parisads are engaged not with these problems but those suited for the society of Antiquarians. It has become the tilting-ground of the specialists. The religious education of the nation is not undertaken on broad lines. It is not seen that spiritual inheritance cannot be any longer the monopoly of a favoured few. Ideas are forces, and they must be broadcasted, if the present ageing to death is to be averted. It would be indeed strange if the spirit of the Upanishads, the Gita and the Dialogues of Buddha, that could touch the mind to such fine issues, should have lost its power over man. If, before it is too late, there is a reorganisation of national life there is a future for Indian thought; and one cannot tell what flowers may yet bloom, what fruits may yet ripen on the hardy old trees.

While those who have not yet been subjected to the influence of Western culture are conservatives in all matters of thought and practice, there are some among those educated in Western ways of thinking who adopt a despairing philosophy of naturalistic rationalism and ask us to get rid of the weight of the past. These are intolerant of tradition and suspicious of the alleged wisdom of age. This attitude of the "progressives" is easily understood. The spiritual heritage of the race

has not protected India from the invader and the spoiler. It seems to have played her false and betrayed her into the present state of subjection. These patriots are eager to imitate the material achievements of Western states, and tear up the roots of the ancient civilisation, so as to make room for the novelties imported from the West. Till the other day Indian thought was not a subject of study in the Indian Universities, and even now its place in the philosophical curricula of the Universities is insignificant. Suggestions of the inferiority of Indian culture permeate the whole educational atmosphere. The policy inaugurated by Macaulay, with all its cultural value, is loaded on one side. While it is so careful as not to make us forget the force and vitality of Western culture, it has not helped us to love our own culture and refine it where necessary. In some cases, Macaulay's wish is fulfilled, and we have educated Indians who are "more English than the English themselves," to quote his well-known words. Naturally some of these are not behind the hostile foreign critic in their estimate of the history of Indian culture. They look upon India's cultural evolution as one dreary scene of discord, folly and superstition. One of their number recently declared that, if India is to thrive and flourish, England must be her "spiritual mother" and Greece her "spiritual grandmother." Albeit, since he has no faith in religion, he does not propose the displacement of Hinduism by Christianity. These victims of the present age of disillusion and defeat tell us that the love of Indian

thought is a nationalist foible, if not a pose of the highbrows.

It is a bewildering phenomenon that, just when India is ceasing to appear grotesque to Western eyes, she is beginning to appear so to the eyes of some of her own sons. The West tried its best to persuade India that its philosophy is absurd, its art puerile, its poetry uninspired, its religion grotesque and its ethics barbarous. Now that the West is feeling that its judgment is not quite correct, some of us are insisting that it was wholly right. While it is true that it is difficult in an age of reflection to push men back into an earlier stage of culture and save them from the dangers of doubt and the disturbing power of dialectic, we should not forget that we can build better on foundations already laid than by attempting to substitute a completely new structure of morality, of life and of ethics. We cannot cut ourselves off from the springs of our life. Philosophical schemes, unlike geometrical constructions, are the products of life. The heritage of our history is the food that we have to absorb on pain of inanition.

The conservatives are convinced of the glory of the ancient heritage and the godlessness of modern culture; the radicals are equally certain of the futility of the ancient heritage and the value of naturalistic rationalism. There is much to be said for these views; but the history of Indian thought, when rightly studied, will lead us to regard the two as equally defective. Those who condemn Indian culture as useless are

ignorant of it, while those who commend it as perfect are ignorant of any other. The radicals and the conservatives, who stand for the new hope and the old learning, must come closer and understand each other. We cannot live by ourselves in a world where aircraft and steamships, railways and telegraphs are linking all men together into a living whole. Our system of thought must act and react on the world progress. Stagnant systems like pools, breed obnoxious growths while flowing rivers constantly renew their waters from fresh springs of inspiration. There is nothing wrong in absorbing the culture of other peoples ; only we must enhance, raise and purify the elements we take over, fuse them with the best in our own. The right procedure regarding the fusing together of the different elements tossed from outside into the national crucible, is indicated roughly in the writings of Gandhi and Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh and Bhagavan Das. In them we see the faint promise of a great future, some signs of a triumph over scholasticism, as well as response to the discovery of a great culture. While drawing upon the fountains of humanist idealism in India's past, they show a keen appreciation of Western thought. They are anxious to reseek the ancient fountain-head and direct its waters to irrigate, through pure and uncontaminated conduits, lands which hunger and thirst. But the future which we wish to see is practically non-existent. With the slackening of the political excitement, which is absorbing the energies of some of the best minds of

India, with the increasing insistence on the study of Indian thought in the new Universities, which the old ones are following most reluctantly, the dawn may break. The forces of the conservatism, which prefers the life that was to the life that will be, are not likely to gain any strength in the days to come.

The problem facing Indian Philosophy to-day is whether it is to be reduced to a cult, restricted in scope and with no application to the present facts or whether it is to be made alive and real, so as to become what it should be, one of the great formative elements in human progress, by relating the immensely increased knowledge of modern science to the ancient ideals of India's philosophers. All signs indicate that the future is bound up with the latter alternative. Loyalty to the spirit of the previous systems of thought, as well as the mission of philosophy, requires us to possess an outlook that always broadens. Indian philosophy acquires a meaning and a justification for the present only if it advances and ennobles life. The past course of Indian philosophic development encourages us in our hope. The great thinkers, Yajnavalkya and Gargi, Buddha and Mahavira, Gautama and Kapila, Sankara and Ramanuja, Madhva and Vallabha, and scores of others are India's grandest title to existence, a clear testimony of her dignity as a nation with a soul, the proof that she may yet rise above herself and the pledge of this supreme possibility.

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